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MARIE ADELAIDE

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VIENNESE MEDLEY
OTHER WAYS AND OTHER FLESH



MARIE ADELAIDE

Aged 15

Three years before her accession

(1877)

MARIE ADELAIDE

Grand Duchess of Luxemburg,

Duchess of Nassau

by

EDITH O'SHAUGHNESSY



*" . . . Let determined things to destiny
hold unbewailed their way. . . ."*

Keats

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To
Nicholas Frederic Brady
In Remembrance

To
Genevieve Garvan Brady
In Affection

MCMXXXII

FOREWORD

THIS is the story of a soul written against the war-scarred, flower-grown walls of Luxemburg.

It is somewhat in awe that I have taken from the crypt under the chapel of the Castle of Hohenburg, in Upper Bavaria, where they lie outside the confines of her Duchy, the bones of the youngest, most beautiful and most unfortunate ruler of the war-Europe of our day. I have invested them as well as may be with the tissue of authentic happening and documented word gathered from sure and intimate sources, endeavouring to reanimate that symmetrical form, to clothe it again with its lovely flesh — turned all too soon to dust. Her glories were those of youth, beauty, power and peace; her tragedies and humiliations those of temperament and circumstance. She was not, though so bright a link in a royal chain, destined to keep it unbroken, but was compelled to renounce, first her visible kingdom, then that on the shadowy borderland of the soul.

Scarcely out of adolescence Marie Adelaide, Grand Duchess of Luxemburg, Duchess of Nassau, was called to reign over a storied, multi-coloured kingdom on whose great rock Rome itself had camped, on which the peace of Europe has immemorially split. At the age of twenty-four she abdicated in favour of a beloved sister born under a happier conjunction of stars.

FOREWORD

She is of the stuff of legend and quickly, quickly one must snatch and limn the realities of her life. Even now her once-forgetful people dazzled by her spiritual glory beseech her intercession in their needs, while history is busy covering her with the deceptive moss of hearsay.

EDITH O'SHAUGHNESSY.

22 Via Gregoriana,
May 3rd, 1931.

I

PATHS OF GLORY

‘Mir welle bleiwe wat mer sinn’

(‘We want to remain what we are’)

De Feierwon (The Festal Train)

Michael Lentz

CHAPTER I

DAUGHTER OF THE HOUSE OF NASSAU

'Je maintiendrai'

MARIE ADELAIDE, Grand Duchess of Luxemburg, Duchess of Nassau was the first of six daughters to be born to a son-hungry mother; she was the first ruler since the thirteenth century to see the light of day on the soil of a sovereign Luxemburg; the first freely, even gladly to abdicate; the first and only ruler to die in self-imposed exile.

Shining, unflecked jewel taken from the casket of earliest youth she hung but a few years upon the war-scarred, rose-set breast of her Duchy; but it was long enough to place her name and loveliness securely in history, as well as to show that dread sequence of fatalities observable in the destinies of those who through no fault nor willing of their own are to find on the earth neither place, nor thing of which they can say 'this indeed is mine. . . .'

She was born during the evening of the fourteenth of June, 1894, at the Castle of Colmar-Berg some twenty-seven kilometres from the city of Luxemburg. Like the evening star she arose, like it all too quickly to be lost below the horizon. Her father was William IV of Nassau, son of Adolf of Nassau to whom the Grand Duchy had passed on the death of the King

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Grand Duke William III of the Netherlands. Her mother, Marie Anne was of the ancient, kingly line of Braganza. Cannon and church bells announced the propitious occurrence to an eagerly awaiting populace.

The dynasty of the Grand Duchy of Luxemburg is not subject to the Salic Law, this latter having been subordinated, in 1873, to the house-law of Nassau which provides that in the event of extinction of the males, the succession shall pass to the daughter or nearest heiress of the last male. Such was Marie Adelaide. Such has been many a ruler of Luxemburg — whose sons so often fall in battle.

Marie Adelaide's life was cast predestinatedly into two parts, separated one from the other as definitely as light and shade. Her childhood, brightly haloed with expectancies; two years of peaceful reign; sovereign in a war-world whose blood-waves broke at her very doors, drenching her person; whose peace destroyed then effaced her for she was not even a figure, much less a pawn, in post-war Europe. Then that *Vita Umbratilis*, that life in the shade, in which her vast and voiceless inner tragedy was to be played. . . .

But for awhile she was to wear a crown, hold a sceptre. From her slim shoulder, across her virgin breast the broad orange ribbon of the House of Nassau was to hang, its great star to shine over her heart. That abode of innocence and spiritual humility was also the home of a tenacious will, a kingly pride. All was fused in the white heat of that desire to be worthy in the eyes of God as well as of man of her

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high destiny — Marie Adelaide, Grand Duchess of Luxemburg, Duchess of Nassau, Countess Palatine of the Rhine, Countess of Sayn, Königstein, Katzelenbogen and Dietz, Margravine of Hammerstein, Lady of Mahlberg, Wiesbaden, Idstein, Merenberg, Limburg and Epstein — by the grace of God.

Her childhood, together with that of her five quickly following sisters, lay in the shadow of the decade-long illness of their father, William of Nassau. This prince, born in 1852, was to spend ten years upon a bed of suffering, victim of a certain form of paralysis. During the last lustrum of his life he could scarcely distinguish which hand fed him, nor recognize in any way those who ministered to his wants; yet his existence lay heavily upon his home.

For years his consort, the Grand Duchess Marie Anne, regent since 1908, had signed perfunctorily, often unread, such State papers as absolutely needed the royal signature, the government being administered by Paul Eyschen, Minister of State, holding, too, the varied portfolios of Foreign Affairs, of Justice and of Agriculture. Under three rulers, the King Grand Duke William III, Adolf I, William IV, and herself regent he had been the virtual head of government, the man on whom the undisputed direction of its prospering inner and peaceful outer policies had devolved.

It was the exclusive almost fanatical devotion of the Grand Duchess for that mind-darkened, flesh-suffering fragment of humanity which had once been lover and husband that rendered her increasingly indifferent to matters of State. That hot Braganza

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blood restrained till she was thirty-two had made of her first and foremost wife. Such she was to remain. She had always accompanied her husband on his shooting trips, on his many travels. Later, vainly seeking some cure or climate that would arrest that creeping, pitiless malady, they spent over-much time away from the Duchy, in the Black Forest, on the Riviera.

The Duchess Marie Anne was a tall, slender, dark-haired, fine-eyed woman with deep lines about the mouth, graven by those years of solicitous attendance on her husband's needs. Her shoulders were somewhat high and bent but she had lovely hands and feet, and though without the actual beauty so often the heritage of the House of Braganza, was distinguished of mien and bearing. About her husband's bedside she soon swung the centre of family life, and it was in the shadow of its solitudes and sympathies that the necessary acts of her regency were performed, together with those of the somewhat casual upbringing of her daughters, entrusted, because of her single preoccupation, largely to ladies-in-waiting and governesses.

Paul Eyschen continued to be not only the power behind the throne, but that in full view. He might have sat for a portrayal of God the Father with his silvery white beard and fine, shining eyes; he was short and stout, very amiable, an excellent raconteur, sparkling with apropos anecdote, full of reminiscence, his mind a storehouse of historic fact. To all this was added the practical wisdom garnered from a vast and varied experience. Coming from Diekirch on the eastern border, of ancient, honourable peasant stock,

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early his talents led him to the world of thought. He studied law, was made deputy, represented his country abroad and finally in 1888 became Minister of State, President of the government. As orator he was both master and example, and his funeral oration at the grave of the poet Lentz and that at the unveiling of the monument in his honour have passed into the literary history of the Duchy and of Europe. Wholeheartedly attached to the House of Nassau, his political colour was Liberal and his policies Francophile.

He had long since, as was fitting, lost his political illusions. Indeed it has been said that if a man keeps them after his fiftieth year he has never grown up, or there is something the matter with his head. Neither of these could apply to Luxemburg's gifted Prime Minister. . . . He seemed to be Marie Adelaide's Lord Melbourne. Life without 'Monsieur Eyschen' was unknown. She was to turn gladly, confidently to him. He on his part was to fall under the spell of her youth and beauty, his old age was to warm itself at her fresh ardours. It was the delight of renewal for him, for Marie Adelaide it had the force of all beginnings.

So much, for the moment, of this minister who died of a heart attack in 1915 on his unmistakably impending fall from power in the third year of Marie Adelaide's reign. She was the fourth sovereign he had served. Doubtless even without the war-storm beating at Luxemburg's door, there would have been a clash — though not one to send him to his grave — between those two natures, one skilled and outward-going, the other for ever and temperamentally afraid of invasion,

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with timidities and humilities so great that it could only maintain itself by an excess of reserve and pride, a desperate courage, an invulnerable composure; enigmatic in all things, even to Paul Eyschen by whom the characters and desires of three sovereigns and a regent had been as easily read as a one-syllabled book. . . .

It was in the person of Adolf of Nassau, grandfather of Marie Adelaide, that Luxemburg had again an overlord without allegiances beyond the frontiers of the Duchy.

After a regency had become necessary in Holland on account of the illness of the King Grand Duke William, Adolf from Vienna advised Paul Eyschen, already President of the government of Luxemburg, that he was willing to take upon himself a similar regency for the Grand Duchy in accord with certain articles of its constitution. Four days later on April 6th, 1889, he made his entry into the city clad in the Nassau uniform and helmet deceptively resembling that of Prussia. The Luxemburgers used for centuries to the most varied figures of overlords accepted him as he was. At least he was their very own.

Born in 1817, destiny called him late, when kings are mostly dust, to take up the duties of his new patrimony. Rich, art-loving, woman-appraising, of easy-going temperament he came from a pleasant life of consideration without responsibility in the Kaiserstadt to one which while it continued in a more definite form that consideration, exempted him by circumstance and senescence from the burdens and problems of his new estate. Of these he was relieved

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by Paul Eyschen in the full force of a magnificent maturity.

He enjoyed during his life-time a large part of the apanage of his immensely wealthy first wife, Elizabeth Michailowna, Grand Duchess of Russia, whose death in child-birth is the only recorded sorrow of his life.* He was also rich in his own right, owning half the town of Wiesbaden, from which the grand ducal finances were long administered, as well as the 'Platte,' a large and beautiful tract of forest land in its environs. He bought many works of art for Luxemburg and spent his money freely on 'improvements' of ancient buildings and on the purchase of new, renovating among other dwellings the time-beautiful castle of Colmar-Berg. He had always been a lavish spender, sometimes a spectacular one, as when on a visit to Dalmatia, his gentleman-in-waiting was bidden to follow him with bags of gold pieces, which the prince dispersed on walks or drives to an enthusiastic and appreciative populace. He was a man who liked a smile even from a stranger.

Since the twelfth century there has been a castle of some sort in the place known as Colmar-Berg, where Attert and Alzette meet ripplingly in a many-acred park. It was Prince Henry, ruling the Duchy for William III of the Netherlands who rebuilt the old

Vienne le 4 Février, 1845.

* 'Nous avons été consterné de la mort de la pauvre Duchesse de Nassau . . . L'officier arrivé de Wiesbaden ici pour porter la nouvelle au Prince Maurice de Nassau a dit que rien n'était comparable au désespoir du Duc de Nassau, qu'il allait comme un fou du corps de sa femme à celui de son enfant . . . Il adorait sa femme qui avait su se faire aimée de toute la famille et de tout le pays.'

Comte A. de Sonis: *Lettres du Comte et de la Comtesse Ficquelmont à la Comtesse Thiessenhausen.*

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château in admirable taste using whatever was possible of ancient tower and façade. The money of Adolf turned it into a quite ugly, very comfortable modern edifice, its various parts held together by the thread of a dubious rococo. Into it the family moved again in 1911. The Grand Duke also acquired from the Stolbergs, who had in turn bought it from the Herwarths, the beautiful castle of Hohenburg at Lenggries in the Bavarian Alps where the grand ducal family were to spend over-much time, as rated by their subjects, outside their own frontiers; where Adolf himself was to depart from a world that had been so very kind to him. Dying at the age of eighty-eight, (November 17th, 1905) he had found in Luxemburg the most honourable of retreats for his old age, made pleasantly if not diversely interesting by the annual arrival of daughters to his son, during those latter years somewhat slackly associated with him in government.

It was in Hohenburg, in almost total seclusion, that Marie Adelaide passed a large part of her childhood. It is a country of captivating, haunting beauty. Its roads, with their recurrent, hooded shrines protecting the bleeding Christ or His sword-pierced Mother, lead through the blue-black of shadows cast by incandescent mountain-tops. Ancient wooden bridges are thrown over cold streams, the fields they water are dark and rich, the forests black and strongly scented; the air that bending peasants breathe is cold-warm. Through its valley runs the 'Isar, rolling rapidly.' The lords of its castles are passionate, proud, full of hot frailties; given to spiritual aspirations and worldly renunciations.

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Here the sisters with the exception of Marie Adelaide and the last two were born in quick succession and also in complete indifference as to the possibility, most undesirable, of a son and heir seeing the light of day on foreign soil instead of on that of Luxemburg. After the birth of the sixth daughter William, already plagued with the beginnings of his fatal illness, in order to make doubly secure the succession to his first-born child caused a further change to be made in the statutes of the House of Nassau which was ratified on July 4th, 1907, by the Chamber of Deputies, desirous itself of a continuance of the dynasty and the resultant stability of government; it being an axiom that the peace, prosperity and independence of small countries are more securely and more economically assured by a dynastic succession than by the uncertain thread of changing and hungry political parties. This is daylight clear in regard to Luxemburg whose boundaries lying along Belgium, France and Germany make it peculiarly exposed to vicissitudes. It is the blood-rusted key both to West and East, lying straight in the road between Trèves and Rheims, over which Roman and Gallic, German and French armies have passed since time immemorial. The motto of its royal house '*Je maintiendrai*' is of vital import. . . .

Marie Adelaide was her grandfather Adolf's special favourite. She would one day be even as he himself — ruler of an independent Luxemburg. The Nassau strain was early evidenced in her, though beautified and complicated by her southern Braganza inheritance. For all that, it was Nassau, it would 'maintain.' It has been noted that the Netherlands and Luxemburg

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have generally prospered under femine rule. In our day this is certainly true of both. . . .

The old Grand Duke became very near-sighted, almost blind towards the end of his life and after having seen him fall flat over a foot-stool, Marie Adelaide got into the habit of taking his hand when he arose from his great armchair, pushing objects out of his path, 'so that you won't stumble' she would say, looking up at him with immense blue eyes. He on his side was for ever asking for his little 'Maus' as he called her and by which quite deceptive name she was always to be known in her family. Nassau understood Nassau. One of her first childish letters written at the age of seven was to him, to whom so many things had become 'all the same.'

'Schloss Berg le 25,-2,-1901

Mon cher grand papa, reviens bientôt avec ta femme. J'ai reve que nous avons dine avec toi dans notre chambre a Luxemburg et que Loti a dit Grandpapa est-ce que tu aimes ça? Et que tu a répondu ça m'est egal (all the same to me). Mille baisers de moi et de Loti aussi a Grand maman. Ta petite Maus. . . .'

It was in the nature of things that Marie Adelaide should be a somewhat spoilt child. Was it not her hand that would take the crown of Luxemburg from its dusty case?

On the approach of adolescence she was given over to silences for which there was no apparent reason, or to gusty fits of temper. In all this she did not differ from other children from their birth destined to a

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throne, their development being of necessity subject to cross-currents, drawing them now here now there. Marie Adelaide early showed something persistently inviolate and elusive, together with disfiguring timidities, inexplicable obstinacies which she only later learned to conceal with that smiling, proud composure.

She would lock herself in her room for hours at a time, then would issue forth something dark, even sullen, washed over her young face, preserving a mutinous silence until the simple pleasures of her daily life taken in common with her sisters unloosed again those naturally closed-in springs of her being. There was little account taken by Marie Adelaide's entourage of that endless difference in the make of souls as in faces, in the complexion of minds as in bodies, and not more of the fact that at her bare emergence from adolescence she would find herself at the head of government, passing in a day from a world of women into one of men. She was destined to grope her way through her short life experimentally.

Of statecraft nothing was taught her. Stereotyped lessons in history, economics and the laws of the country where the Code Napoleon was in full force were given her by Professor Oster, later, disappointingly to the family, enrolling himself under the anticlerical banner. Professor Emile d'Huart gave her lessons in chemistry and the natural sciences for which she had so great a love. There are, too, the shadowy figures of the French-Swiss, Mlle. Viuchard, of the English Miss MacElligott, of the Luxemburgerin, Fräulein Knaff who perfected her in German. Little was done to

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prepare her for her future duties, above all no attempt was made to overcome by any outside intercourse that inborn social timidity that plagued her throughout her public life. She was not even taught the patois of her country so dear to every Luxemburger, part and parcel of the history of the Duchy. The schools are bilingual, but as soon as those sturdy boys and girls leave their classes in French or German* they immediately relapse into their own peculiar dialect in which there 'wander vague and clear, strange vowels, mysterious gutturals. . . .'

Just as the country preserves traces of the peoples who have swept across it or dwelt in it, so the language has borrowed from a dozen tongues — Celtic, Roman, Saxon, Norman, Spanish, Flemish, French and German with others in between. It breaks itself up into at least four definite varieties and the textures of all are fantastic. In 1896 a proposal was made to admit the use of the patois in Parliament but it was set aside as unconstitutional. It is, however, of the marrow of the people. '*Dove è la lingua ivi è la nazione.*' where the language is there is the nation, truth lying at the root of much of Europe's discontent.

It has been said that the 'true business of education is not to perfect a learner in all or any of the sciences and arts but to give to his mind that freedom, that disposition, those habits that may enable him to attain to any part of the knowledge of which he may be in need in the future course of his life.' This is especi-

* The bilingual nature of the Duchy is supposed to date from the acquisition of Arlon in the gift of the Countess Ermesinde's second husband, Waleran of Limburg. He gave to Luxemburg two sections — German on the East and Walloon on the West.

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ally true of princes, and little or nothing of it was done for Marie Adelaide, who with her peculiarly complex, reserved nature, was left to grow up as those trees which, ripened *aux quatre vents* bear now noble, now stunted fruit as best they may. Furthermore that brigade of six sisters bound inseparably together presented, despite their softly budding loveliness, an impregnable front. They were sufficient to themselves, intimidating to others. They invented a language of their own, used disconcertingly in the presence of strangers, even more cryptic than their patois. Their natural affection for one another was exceeding.

Marie Adelaide was, however, already set apart. She was the heiress-daughter, to be answerable to God as well as to man for the stewardship of that small though highly-coloured land. Her heritage hung over her adolescence like a dark cloud with a golden, fiery fringe. To the affright in face of a seductive, troubling destiny is attributed much of that variability of temper that made her upbringing more difficult than that of her sisters. Her own nature and the circumstances of her life were to be in continual combat. In no way was it then manifest that she was of the stuff out of which legends are fashioned nor that she possessed in her soul the essential qualities of sainthood. The desire to be under obedience that so deeply influenced her later years was scarcely at all in evidence. Instead there were strange fits of passionate rebellion against authority and usage. She seemed to have no gift of prayer, showing at times a positive distaste for the

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practices of piety. She had a way of standing at the door of the chapel during Mass, rather than of going up to take her proper place on the prie-dieu by her mother's side. Sometimes she refused to join in the family devotions, alleging one or the other excuse — sometimes wilfully giving none at all and simply absenting herself. In fact like the majority of children, she seemed fairly indifferent to matters of religion, certainly nothing in the least revealed that unfulfillable desire for the conventual life that was to crucify her last years and urge her to efforts beyond her physical and nervous strength.

Her father, like so many of the modern rulers of Luxemburg, was of the Protestant faith, as might have been a son and heir, though the population of Luxemburg is entirely Catholic. Her mother was Catholic according to the princely tradition of the House of Braganza. In the Nassau family wherever there has been a difference of faith, the sons have followed the religion of their fathers, the daughters that of their mothers. This fact somewhat consoled Marie Anne, of great personal piety, for not having borne sons.

During centuries the house of Braganza has produced flowers of faith and holiness. The five sisters of the Grand Duchess regent, those many *Tanten* of Marie Adelaide's youth, with the exception of the Infanta Maria Josepha, once consort of Duke Carl Theodore of Bavaria, still exist in the flesh, though they have now been pushed by circumstances off the stage of history. They are the Infanta Maria married to Prince Alphonse of Bourbon; the beautiful early-

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widowed Maria Theresa,* married to the Archduke Charles Louis, brother of the Emperor Francis Joseph, father by his second marriage with Marie Annonciade, Princess of Bourbon and of the Sicilies, of Franz Ferdinand whose assassination was to drench Europe in blood, to cost Marie Adelaide her throne, and certainly to discredit the airy saying of Disraeli that 'assassination has never changed the course of history.' The third of the Grand Duchess Marie Anne's sisters, the childless Princess Adelgund, was married to Prince Henry of the Artois branch of the Bourbon family, known as Count Bardi. She, too, during long years watched in tireless devotion over the sufferings of a charming, irritable, discomfited, early-paralysed husband, who liked very young faces about him. The last sister, Antonia, became the consort of Duke Henry of Bourbon Parma,† to whom she bore many children, among them the Empress Zita. All of these women in one or another way have been remarkable for their goodness, devotion, piety, also for their restricted outlook upon events. Their trials, both private and public, have been many and the Great War finally wiped them from the stage of history if not from the earth. . . .

* Maria Theresa bore Charles Louis two daughters, Marie Annunziata destined in her early thirties to be the tall, shy, handsome 'first lady' at Franz Joseph's court, taking the place which would naturally have been her mother's, as widows did not, according to age-old etiquette, assume this honour. Her *état civil* is now Fräulein Annunziata Hapsburg, that of her mother is Frau Hapsburg-Braganza, and they live in a penury that they have known how to render noble. The second daughter, Elizabeth, is married to a prince of the House of Liechtenstein, her son being heir to the Principality.

† Maternal grandfather of Boris III of Bulgaria, married to Giovanna di Savoia, October 25th, 1930. The Assisan marriage of this queen sets her apart in history from those whose nuptials have been celebrated with greater pomp and circumstance.

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Life at the Castle of Berg as that at Hohenburg was of the simplest — the unchanging, seemingly changeless, definitely prescribed life of a provincial court, with little or no play for fancy or individuality. Marie Adelaide's love of nature gave her a needed outlet. Early she seems to have turned from the uncertain world of men and things to find her pleasure in that of nature obeying its immutable laws. She had a passionate and persistent interest in its smallest manifestations. A little hut in the park at Hohenburg was set aside as her private property and there she would spend hours with butterflies, moths, lizards, beetles, snails that she was for ever collecting. She, too, it was who found the first crocus, anemone, violet, lily of the valley in the pale spring forests. In autumn she sought out and catalogued seemingly endless varieties of mushrooms, richly, pungently dotting the carpets of moss and fallen leaves. The symmetrical forms of all these lesser things of creation were as if magnified in her eyes. The unfolding of fern fronds, the intricate patterns of moss and lichen were her especial delight. 'But don't you see,' she would cry, 'where the men of the ages of faith got their inspiration?' holding up some bit of fern, a closed dandelion, a tiny ash bud, whose essential symmetry was concealed from less gifted eyes. Their phallic significances alone were hidden.

The flora of South Luxemburg is of a special luxuriant beauty; rose-red water-plants, cornflowers and moonroot, speedwell, foxglove, hart's tongue, hellebore, lovely ferns and orchids abound. Its towns, Wasserbillig on the vineyard-banked Moselle and

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Grevenmacher form the *bon pays* of the winelands. Underneath are coal and iron. The Duchy is rich, rich in all things needed for the sustenance of her sons and daughters.

Marie Adelaide would come back from long walks, light in her eyes, colour in her cheeks, invariably in her hand a bouquet of wild flowers, grasses, or some small insect. One winter she kept a butterfly in her room feeding it with sugar-water. It would fly about her head as she sat at work. This love of nature in all its moods and manifestations was to have a determining influence on the events of her later life when God in nature rather than nature of itself was what she continually sought. Sometimes she exclaimed 'How beautiful is the world!' but mostly she would remain silent before some landscape—the bright-dark beauty of the Bavarian Alps, or the soft green meadows and fine trees of the great park at Castle Berg, through which the little Attert River ripples so sweetly to its damp and dewy meeting with the Alzette.

The Master of the Horse, Baron van Bohlen-Halbach gave her as a child three young bears whose mother had been left in Russia. Marie Adelaide loved these animals, taking personal care of them. It was only in after years when they grew too big and fierce and their nature, quite unchanged by their gentle upbringing, impelled them to tear various sheep and lambs to pieces, that the hour of parting was decreed and they were sent to the Munich Zoological Gardens. A year after when their young mistress visited them calling their names in a strange, low voice, they unmistakably recognized her. . . .

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The sisters were always dressed alike and in the simplest fashion, gowns, hats and coats being ordered by the half dozen without any regard for their forms, complexions or ages. Those blue serge, those red silk, those white embroidered muslin dresses are, in many of the photographs, disfiguringly ugly. After her father's death when the family and ladies-in-waiting were up to the chin and down to the heels in crêpe there was some slight distinction made in the raiment of the *Erbgrossherzogin* from that of her sisters but it continued to be very plain, largely what has since become known as sports clothes — blouse, skirt and sweater or the stereoptyped tailor suit. Later she was drawn to delicate shining colours, greys, pale blues, pinks, white, and on state occasions her entry into an assemblage with that great diamond tiara high on her head, the broad orange ribbon across her breast, her proudly shy carriage proclaimed her the heiress, the ruler. But always there was in evidence that troubling mixture of personal humility and lineal pride, that hot upwelling of sympathy and physical reserve.

A water-colour hangs at Castle Berg which shows the sisters taking Christmas gifts to the poor of the village. They are clad, scarcely a year apart in age, in their blue tailor costumes and flat, round, blue hats, standing by a little donkey-cart in which are packages and tiny Christmas trees. The picture, extremely naïve, bears the words '*Noël au Château de Berg*' and illustrates one of their Yuletide customs. Their pleasures were as simple as their duties. In the evening billiards, charades, hide and seek, pillow fights, practi-

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cal jokes which seem curiously to delight royalty, who often deprived of the more sophisticated forms of pleasure natural to those of the great world have always indulged persistently and with relish in such-like uncomplicated amusements.

It was at the Castle of Hohenburg that Marie Adelaide made her first Communion, at the age of eleven. In her white veil and gown, her floating hair crowned with a white wreath, holding her long white candle with its hanging ribbons she is said to have made a more than usually lovely picture of childish innocence and recollection. But even then she gave no signs of that great piety which was to enable her to bear with such composure the trials of her public life. Also to lead her to early death.

In the beginning of her father's illness she was his constant companion. For a second time it was Nassau with Nassau, incommunicated and uncommunicable as were the diversities of their temperaments. William was all of a piece; his daughter-heiress a mosaic of gold and many colours — under glass. No one was ever to touch the true colour and stuff of her being.

It will be seen that Marie Adelaide's childhood in no wise differed from that of countless other province-bred royalties segregated as if in quarantine from those formative relationships natural to people of the great world. Outside the narrow circle of her family she was never to associate with any one on terms of equality. There was in the somewhat feudal mind of the Grand Duchess Marie Anne a distaste, amounting to aversion to the permitting of her daughters to

minge, except in the most formal way of duly arranged visits and audiences, with the daughters of the aristocracy of Luxemburg, Trèves or Munich. Friendships might have been formed where the shading would have been less definite, her daughters less exalted, their apartness threatened. They were of different stuff—of different stuff they must remain. On the other hand when they were little the Grand Duchess would on occasion allow them, properly watched over by governess or lady-in-waiting, to play with the children of foresters, gardeners or other employees on their estates. But whatever they did they still remained set apart. It was a quite unnatural existence, with no possible give and take, and the girls continued to be inaccessible to any normal intercourse with those of their generation. They were shy, awkward, silent, when, rarely, they found themselves in the presence of anyone not of their immediate world composed entirely of relatives—*die Tanten*, the aunts (there seem to have been no uncles), this or that feminine visiting cousin, ladies-in-waiting and governesses, which bore no slightest resemblance to that impending outside. Marie Adelaide was thus in no way broken in to the duties of her royal destiny, to those manifold difficulties presenting themselves inevitably in the path of any reigning princess, much less was she fitted to cope with those abnormal and unsurmountable ones of the Great War into which at the age of twenty, two short years after her accession, she found herself involved. Luxemburg, playing its age-long role, stood squarely in the path of warring armies. . . .

It was in the pursuance of these simple occupations

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of her simple life that Marie Adelaide, swiftly advancing to meet her troubled destiny then brightly veiled in youth and glory, stepped for the first time into the great world. . . .

CHAPTER II
EPITHALAMIUM

Veni, sponsa mea

ON October 21st, 1911, the nuptials of Charles, Francis Joseph, Louis, Hubert, George, Maria, heir on a hidden, blood-drenched date to the Hapsburg throne, and Zita, Marie des Graces, Adelgonde, Michelle, Raphaële, Gabrielle, Josephine, Antonia, Louise, Agnès of the house of Bourbon Parma, were celebrated at Schwarza am Steinfelde in Styria with the pomp and circumstance that seemed their due.

To these festivities the Grand Duchess Marie Anne went with her daughters, Marie Adelaide, Charlotte a year and a half younger, her lady- and her gentleman-in-waiting. . . .

Charles was a tall, brown-haired, grey-eyed, regular-featured, well set up, rather phlegmatic young man of the best intentions, limited ability and vacillating will. Zita on the other hand was small, dark, very pretty, with great natural vivacity, a strong will, an undisguised love of power. She was the twelfth of twenty children born to Robert, Prince of Bourbon, Duke of Parma, married first to the Princess Marie Pie des Graces of Bourbon and the Sicilies and *en secondes nocces* to Marie Antonia, Infanta of Portugal. The Empress Zita early showed those superior

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qualities of will and devotion which have dignified her long exile, but which were to be of no avail in the merciless though seemingly magnificent circumstances in which she was to find herself three short years after her marriage, on the assassination of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand and the Duchess of Hohenburg at Sarajevo. . . .

There was, however, no prophetic writing on the walls of the Castle of Schwarza, no magic lantern projection of that geranium and heliotrope-scented isle in the Atlantic* as Charles in gala uniform, loaded with the orders of his long inheritance and Zita, a dream of young loveliness in her trailing white gown and priceless lace veil held in place by the high crown of her new estate glittering above her starry eyes, were joined in matrimony.

The grey ghosts of fatality were invisible as they slipped, in every guise and form, among that shining assemblage. From Charles, young, amiable, untried, loving and beloved, it was permitted to hope great things; Zita, sparkling, charming, keen-witted with that *don de la réplique* so greatly prized in princes, was the royal bride of legend, Empress-to-be, the magnificence of whose destiny seemed unassailable. But that bright-hung marriage-hall was lined with destiny's darkest stuffs. . . .

On the return journey the Grand Duchess Marie Anne who had the habit of taking one or another of her daughters into her room at night, gave this privilege to Marie Adelaide. Only long afterwards did she divulge the entirely unexpected consequences

* Funchal, Madeira, 1st April, 1922.

MARIE ADELAIDE

of that first appearance in the great world as heiress-daughter of Luxemburg, witness of those shining nuptials.

‘Soon after I had put out the little lamp Marie Adelaide called to me in a whisper, “Mother, there is something I must tell you before I can sleep.” Then quickly, in a half-suffocated voice, “I shall never marry. Never ask it of me. And I do not wish to reign.” I was aghast, and could only cry “But your heritage, your throne!” “Lotty can take my place. If I were the only one it would be different.” I told her she was tired, overwrought, that when we were again quietly at home she would feel otherwise. But she insisted saying, “It has nothing to do with that. I wish to enter a convent.”’

‘I replied, as soothingly as my agitation allowed, that I would never put any obstacles in her way if such proved truly to be her desire. I pointed out, however, that it would be twenty years at least — that Lotty must marry, her son be eighteen — before she would be free. She answered quickly, “I’ll be an old woman then. I want to give my *all* and *now*”.’

Night and silence. . . .

That short conversation under cover of darkness was the earliest, the only expression of that desire to be about the secret, silent business of her soul. It was, too, the first uneasy, uncertain pointing of the pale finger of her mortal fate.

Yet at that marriage feast which had awakened in Marie Adelaide’s heart the desire to be the bride of Christ rather than that of any earthly prince there was present, moving among the shining figures, *der*

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edle Ritter, the noble knight, who in a dark, decisive hour was to offer her the rose of love. . . .

It has been remembered by many who saw her at Schwarzau that she was of such a virginal loveliness that few dared to approach her, to tread upon that dew of innocence that so visibly lay about her feet. Her head was touched with the first bright flush of breaking day. A crown would soon enhance that loveliness. She seemed designed for early human love. How could one know that in that hour she had espoused, unwitnessed, chastity?

The path of Marie Adelaide's destiny is revealed only occasionally in lightning flashes, in sinister reverberations. Now here, now there, is a rending of the heavens, a swift, partial illumination of the peaks and valleys of her life. Then again silence, darkness, as she pursues her fated and fateful way.

CHAPTER III

CHANGE

'Ainsi toujours poussés vers de nouveaux rivages'

ON her return from Schwarzau two changes of varying import waited Marie Adelaide. Every symptom of the Grand Duke's illness pointed to a fast-approaching, undelayable end. That first-born child would be ruler of Luxemburg at a not distant date . . .

She also found installed during her absence as her lady-in-waiting and this after many family deliberations, a young and gifted woman of the world only a few years her senior — the Countess Anna Montgelas. Daughter of a Bavarian diplomat and of a Russian princess she was not only fitted by training and nature for intercourse with the great world but, warm-hearted yet disciplined, was able by example and precept to modify somewhat Marie Adelaide's stormy and difficult temperament, to induct her somewhat into the usages of the great world, above all to bridge over to some slight extent that apartness from it which was her lot. Those 'born in the purple' mostly present a singular study in the reciprocities of daily living. Unversed in the suavities of normal intercourse, unless possessed of natural social gifts amounting to genius, they feel themselves ill at ease in situations that any man or woman of the slightest worldly habit

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would find simple. At times unduly suspicious, at others unduly confiding, subjected to the grossest or to the most subtle forms of flattery, they rarely hear the truth about anything. Those bringing them bad news or admonition, somewhat like the messengers of olden days who had their heads cut off, suffer dismissal — quite as fatal as death. The '*ja, Königliche Hoheit,*' the '*wie schön, Königliche Hoheit,*' is and must be the unfailing antiphony, the endless fugue of those white glacé-gloved beings — ladies-in-waiting. Other responses to their sovereign's questions and acts there can be few or none, and they remain of a complete and fluid selflessness except as they instantly re-crystallize at contact with the lesser world. They will then be found to partake of the nature of a high stone wall topped with a completely protective amount of broken glass. They are also on occasions — few or frequent according to the temperament of their mistresses — the backstair carriers of the *on dits* weighting so heavily the atmosphere about a court. In these two regards they resemble to a hair the private secretaries of Republican chiefs. So little real variability is there in outward office.

The independent nature of the Countess Anna was, however, noticeable from the first even in the deceptive chiaroscuro playing over the cast-iron traditions of a small court. Of ample and impressive figure, with walk and gesture of one accustomed to move in large spaces, to think freely, her high-cheeked round-chinned Slavic face was lighted by German eyes of a bright, peculiar blue, piercing or soft, under a broad brow and brown hair. Her personal destiny

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was in complete abeyance and she was to pass those ten early marriageable years with one who not only never spoke of marriage, but never thought of it. Three qualities — a naturally disinterested fidelity, an aptitude for placing things according to their value in foreground or background, a sense of humour salting agreeably daily intercourse made of her the heaven-sent companion for the shy, proud, lovely child, temperamentally fearful of bestowing her affections. That a certain modification of her being took place in the company of this, her first friend, there can be little doubt. In the beginning, tasting the sweets of hitherto unknown friendship, Marie Adelaide would often say to her, 'Why are you so kind to me?' Realizing at last that this affection was without *arrière pensée* she gave herself up to it with as much confidence as her reserved nature permitted. Looking back over her life, this relationship would seem to have been one of the few favourable to the general development of the Grand Duchess and her only real intimacy outside her family. . . .

Christmas of 1911, New Year's Day of 1912, passed without sign or sight of the royal family in the Luxemburg heavens. Dear to the privileged ones who receive their rays directly, dearer still to those others who receive them obliquely, both individuals and crowds love bright royal heavens, state functions and displays; the remark, whether of anointed or elected masters, 'they don't do anything,' is more damaging than the discovery of misdemeanours.

The darkness in the Luxemburg heavens was not far to seek. A few weeks later, on the twenty-fifth of

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February, the Grand Duke died in a last intolerable agony of cancer of the tongue following on those years of partial, then of complete paralysis. His groans could be heard by his children watching, waiting for that unnameable visitor noisily unhorsing himself outside their father's door. . . .

The meeting of William of Nassau with his Maker, though so long imminent, so long delayed, was at last come, but in that darkened mind there was stuff neither for thought, nor wish, nor hope. His flesh was in its ultimate suffering. For years all that could have been truly said of him was, 'The end is set, though the end is not yet.'

During the last weeks of his life his consort scarcely left his bedside. She appeared in the family circle only at tea-time when she would find her children, the ladies-in-waiting, the governesses, gathered about the large table spread in a certain pink-hung, Louis XV panelled chamber that was later to be the scene of determining events in Marie Adelaide's public career. The mother of William, the Grand Duchess Adelheid Marie, born Princess of Anhalt, was also at Castle Berg awaiting in maternal anguish the consummation of her son's long years of suffering.

Fate, sometimes inclined to fitness, appointed Marie Adelaide to meet the doctor issuing hastily from the sick-room, when she was on her way to join the family at tea. She burst into the *salon* crying out 'Quick.' They scurried into the Grand Duke's chamber to find him already in his death-agony. Mother, wife, six daughters, ladies-in-waiting, nurses knelt around the bed while the never beautiful, now

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disease-scarred body of the Grand Duke gave itself over to final corruptibility. He himself was unaware of anything save the physical effort to rid himself of his flesh. A Lutheran pastor had been hastily summoned who somewhat dryly performed the indicated ministrations to the gentle slipping of rosary beads and Latin prayers for the dying coming from the lips of his distraught wife, his awed, trembling daughters witnessing death for the first time. . . .

It was inevitable that from the hour of her father's passing Marie Adelaide should assume a position of paramount importance in the family. The Grand Duchess mother, though immersed in sorrow and confronted with the many adjustments attendant on a new way of life, was not without some natural distaste at giving up a place and power which, if little exercised, had given her an importance through long years in favour of that child not yet eighteen years of age. Too, all that reminded her of her loss was unbearable, even the swift passing of her regency. When several days before the death of her husband, certain court officials desiring to have all in readiness for the end so unmistakably at hand, had ordered the black liveries unused since the death of the Grand Duke Adolf to be taken down and aired, the castle had resounded to cries of 'cruel!' 'shameless!' She was not a woman easily to accept change. Not so Marie Adelaide. Her father's death wrought some instant and astounding mutation in her. She asked with a new dignity, a new authority to be left alone with those poor mortal remains on which the great wax candles at head and foot cast their uncertain

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light. Kneeling by his bier on that dark February day, it has been surmised that she came into the first realization of her life-situation—that the months were few which separated her from the grandeurs and responsibilities of public life, distasteful to her backward-fleeing soul, yet welcomed by that innate will to rule. Time alone was to show how highly developed were these two natures, whose conflicts were always to be impenetrably veiled by the excessive reserve of her bearing, the boundless modesty of her spiritual attitudes.

William IV of Nassau, whose only real influence on his daughter's life would seem to have been in those austere and monitory emanations coming from his disease-wasted body and cadaverous face as he lay upon his royal bier, had once been a man of good stature, broad-shouldered, thick-set, with a square very Teuton head and face, a heavy upturned moustache veiling somewhat full lips. His photographs present him as a typical German princeling of his times. Many a man whose yellowing likeness shows him in an unbecoming collar, a necktie once known as four-in-hand, a diamond horse-shoe decorating it, could have carried these off with a certain style and 'go.' Not so the Grand Duke William. He remained for all his royal inheritance, his long, high lineage, as provincial as a Hanoverian Elector entering London. Pleasure-loving in his youth, he took his easy life as he found it and unlike his daughter was a true child of his environment and of his small destiny. He had been a connoisseur of wines, a lover of the good things of the table and would set himself down

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before a saddle of venison, a jugged hare or a *marinierter Karpf* and appropriate wines with an undisguised relish. He had always been a silent man, his thoughts doubtless as restricted as the words that clothed them. An excellent shot, he was very fond of being in the open and would spend weeks in the mountains hunting chamois, in the forests after deer, or engaged in that sport *par excellence* of Luxemburg *la chasse au sanglier*, wild boar hunt. In his green loden suit, thick shoes, little green felt hat with feather at the back he presented a composite picture of dozens of royal, north European Nimrods of the less *chic* sort. His first stroke occurring soon after the death of his long-lived father, the Duchy was only slightly familiar with him in the role of sovereign. But the Luxemburgers had often been under the sway of invisible rulers, owing in one way or another more splendid allegiances than that of Luxemburg. The little ship of state scarcely felt the touch of his hand upon the wheel as it passed through the quiet waters of its governmental voyage. Paul Eyschen securely, continuously at the helm, like all captains, was thankful to do his own steering. The sovereign was entirely content that this should be so and Eyschen was careful to give him the necessary respect, throwing over him as over his father the semblance of a power neither had ever wielded. In this the forceful minister was the shadowy precursor of dictators to come. . . .

As William's seventeen-year-old daughter and heir-ess knelt by his mortal remains in the gloom of that February day it was but a wasted form, a pain-scarred visage that her great dark blue eyes gazed

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upon. Naught of the majesty of high estate lay upon it, not the most fleeting reminder of place and pleasure. It was indeed that 'dust thou art, to dust thou shalt return' of the Pentateuch.

It was said afterwards that in that hour Marie Adelaide tasted in some premature, prophetic wise the insecurity of earthly glory and hope, even the bitterness of her final lot, disguised though it was by those grandeurs to be hers in a few short months. When she came forth from that last, lonely hour with the author of her being whose death placed a crown of thorns upon her head, though it seemed then, secure and glittering, that of a peaceful, prosperous, devoted people, she was wrapt in a dark reserve as inviolable as her black garments. But her mien was altered. It was she who must 'maintain.' She who must 'serve.'

Her future ministers, cognizant of her restricted upbringing, ignorant of her true nature, had seen in her only a simple, shy, beautiful, amenable girl. They were to find that her character was made up of endless nuances which, overlapping, disguised each other till they formed an indecipherable whole.

She had seemed, too, entirely without that love of power so persistent in the flesh of the long-disinherited house of Braganza. But in those months between her father's death and her accession, that innate will to rule was evidently nourished by various jealously concealed thoughts and emotions and brought to a certain degree of conscious being. Was she not to be ruler by the grace of God? However small the dukedom to which she was heiress, it was one of

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Europe's great strategic keys. Above all it was the highway for Gaul and Teuton in their immemorial combats. . . .

With a new, proud acceptance she seems to have viewed her destiny fulfilling itself according to the will of Providence. The things of childhood were done with. She was woman and ruler. There began to be noticeable in her an unsuspected independence, an increasing reasonableness in act and judgment. Her mother when asked about that mystical urge which was to give the final form and direction to her daughter's existence, declared long afterwards:

'Marie Adelaide was not always religious. Often it was with difficulty that I induced her to fulfil her Christian duties. But from the day of her father's death all was changed. She knelt long and alone by his dead body. What took place in her heart I know not, but from that hour she seemed a different being. Before rising from her knees she must have made some secret resolution which she was to carry out with the energy and perseverance that always characterized her in anything once undertaken'. . . .

On February 27th, 1912, M. Eyschen formally announced to the Chamber the death of the Grand Duke William and by a few felicitous phrases the approaching accession of his daughter, Marie Adelaide:

'Let us consider it a happy augury for the future of the land that the Grand Duchess, Marie Adelaide, the first of our sovereigns since centuries to be born on grand ducal soil has breathed from her infancy its native air, has learned to recognize the ideals, the aspirations, the traditions of the people over whom

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she is called to rule. To-day for the first time since November 29th, 1780, we salute a princess on the throne. One cannot help but evoke at this hour the great figure of the Grand Duchess's predecessor, the Empress Maria Theresa, whose reign was so happy for this country and who is known in history less for her achievements in war than in peace, by the impetus she gave to the diffusion of education, to the development of agriculture, of commerce and of industry. May Her Royal Highness realize together with the chivalrous traditions of her own ancestors, the virile lessons of the illustrious woman who proved once again that a sceptre does not lose its prestige in feminine hands when it is wielded with decision, wisdom, benignity.

'Under the protection of a distinguished mother who has proven her devotion to this land, Her Royal Highness, the Grand Duchess Marie Adelaide, will be able as constitutional sovereign to safeguard our independence and our institutions.'

Thus Paul Eyschen who saw before him the highly agreeable duty, nay adventure it might more fittingly be called, of initiating a very young and very beautiful maiden into the intricacies of government. The future was indeed impenetrable. . . .

The Grand Duke's long-unseen body, clad in the Luxemburg uniform, dark blue with red stripes on coat and trousers, described by a diplomat as a cross between that of an Austrian hussar and a fireman's suit, covered with decorations — the Black Eagle, the order of St. Hubert, the order of the Elephant, the order of the Seraphs and many others — was laid

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in state to be exposed to the view of his subjects, first at Castle Berg in the Marmor Saal. There from the ceiling the medallioned face of his ancestor Henry VII, Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire looked down upon him, while about him were the carved and painted coats of arms of the various cantons of the Duchy so long unvisited by him. The next place to receive his mortality was the grand ducal palace of the city, built by a Spanish overlord. Finally he was laid to rest in the church of the age-old burial place of the Nassau family at Weilberg on the Lahn, whose ancient valley gave a king, William III, to England and to Holland the dynasty that still rules it. . . .

At each one of these transfers of William's mortality, the picture was the same: a great black death-carriage, flower-laden, heavy with bead wreaths, drawn by four horses in sable trappings; a slender figure, mourning veil reaching to the heels, head bowed, rosary and prayer book in tightly-clasped, black-gloved hands following solitary behind the bier, suddenly, unequivocally in full sight, heiress-daughter, Luxemburg's dynastic representative, sign and symbol of its independence.

After Marie Adelaide the long space required by ceremonial; then came the widowed consort with her five younger daughters, the Grand Duke's aged mother, the ministers of state, Paul Eyschen at their head, court officials, black-coated, black-gloved, whose bowed heads were the abode of many schemes engendered by the passing of the old order, the coming of the new. All walked with measured pace

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behind the dead master, long unseen, scarcely ever mentioned, and who since so many years had left to others the direction of the ship of state, which had made, however, a prosperous voyage without the touch of his hand upon its wheel. It was his only public appearance in more than ten years. As it was his last nobody begrudged him those multiple, somewhat expensive lyings-in-state. It was unimportant, indifferent, save in its finality and the giving place to new things. His daughter would come of age and into her full constitutional powers in less than four months. The time was short, the changes probably great and though no one divined the strong, proud will of the future Grand Duchess, all suspected the various ambitions on the part of ministers and other officials which would inevitably lead to new groupings in state affairs. . . .

The Grand Duchess Marie Anne was unreasoning, fanatical in her widowed grief. The hot Braganza blood had made of her the most passionate of wives. When her husband fell ill the character of her love but not its force was changed. It had been thought by many that his passing would be a deliverance for her as well as for him. But not so. Too long he had been her daily, hourly love, then her care, the reason for her existence. During the months intervening between his demise and the accession of her daughter she seems to have been exclusively sunk in personal loss and sorrow. Those women who come from the Iberian Peninsula have in them the stuff of faithful widows as well as passionate wives. They always mourn, whether their spouses be worthy or unworthy. They

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rarely re-marry except for reasons beyond their personal willing.

At first Marie Adelaide's new importance was manifest only in the restricted routine of daily life. The young princess, like her father, was very fond of the good things of the table. The menu would be brought to her every morning and she never failed to add favourite dishes or cancel those for which she had no taste. There was no more maternal remonstrance at her continual feeling for her diamond-crested gold cigarette case, her little matchbox, and so she was scarcely ever without a cigarette in her hand, smoking for the most part a certain 'Waldorf' brand. Her dresses were lengthened, she wore a string of pearls, she went first in and out of those familiar doors. The pattern of her days was not only uncomplicated, it was elementary, yet the threads of Luxemburg's history and her own were soon again to appear, knotted and stained, on a vaster canvas.



CHAPTER IV

PROCESSIONAL

*'Dans la tragédie humaine la
paix ne fut jamais qu'un entr'acte'*

It is time to place the adolescent figure of Marie Adelaide clearly in the history of her Duchy and of Europe. A majestic procession of overlords defiles before us as we do so. Many of them are women, nearly all are of foreign blood, with conflicting allegiances. Their dissimilar temperaments and unequal destinies make the multi-coloured history of Luxemburg as they ride possessively in through the gates of the city. All as they pass out leave something of themselves. . . .

In the mist of ages the Celts, bequeathing Menhur and Dolmen, reminders of their passage, prophecies of their vast mystical and social destinies — inhabited the 'Bock,' the great rock on which the city of Luxemburg is built and on which the peace of Europe has so often split.

Later according to the proud plaque at Rodemack, '*Rome a campé sur ce plateau.*' Under the Romans the district was included in the province of Belgica Prima afterwards forming part of the Frankish Kingdom of Austrasia and of the Empire of Charlemagne.

Then appears Sigefroy or Siegfried, reputed founder of the city. But who was this shadowy overlord? Who

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was his consort Melusine, half woman, half mermaid, who came those several hundred kilometres from the sea, the salt of its waves glistening in her green-gold tresses? Undine of Luxemburg, legend will have it that she is still imprisoned in the Bock where she works at a fine linen chemise taking a stitch every seven years. If it is finished before she is freed in a single clap of thunder the city will disappear.

Historians, more prosaic, mate Sigefroy with a certain Hedwig of Lorraine. But it is Melusine who lives in the breath of the people, in bas-relief and statue; Hedwig in the yellow leaves of unread books.

At last divested of the veil of legend, of the dust of research, emerges clearly the lovely figure of Ermesinde, descendant of a certain Conrad II rated traditionally as eighth in the line from Sigefroy. This princess gives the city a sure date, 1244, when she bestowed upon it its famous *Charte d’Affranchissement*, Charter of Liberty. She was born when her father was ninety, after he had lustily enjoyed a life of excesses and disorders, long past, his remoter heirs thought, the term of further paternities. He was destined, however, to leave to the city its most precious legacy in the person of his gifted daughter. Young, beautiful and wise she entered the city wearing her stern Gothic crown, her wide Gothic mantle falling over her long gown lying in folds about her ankles, a branching cross-like rod of peace in her right hand, her left pressed against her heart — noble embodiment of ‘the Thirteenth, Greatest of Centuries.’ She inaugurated for Luxemburg a golden era, founding schools, convents, hospitals in accord with the needs of

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the times, actuated by two desires: the increase of the Duchy's power and prestige, the amelioration of the material and moral condition of her subjects. She was married first at ten years of age to Thibaut, Count de Bar. At the age of twenty-seven, three months after the death of Thibaut, she made a love-marriage with Valeran III of Limburg, Marquis of Arlon. In books written *ad usum Delphini* she is said to have been 'seduced by his reputation for courage and loyalty.'

Early in the fourteenth century there were wider turns of fortune's wheel for Luxemburg, for her overlord was Henry VII, Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire. His rule and his device '*Judicate juste*' though still recorded in palace and castle of the Duchy were not of great immediate advantage. He was engaged in vaster and more glittering duties than those demanded by Luxemburg, which was left largely to the uncertain, arbitrary government of delegates and subordinates. Henry conferred upon his son John the title of Count of Luxemburg when he was preparing to take his high, imperial way over the ice-clad Brenner Pass into the warm, gilded fairness of Italy, where in Rome the great crown awaited him — in Pisa death.

Before his departure Henry married his son to Elizabeth, heiress to the Bohemian throne, which is why he is known to history as King John of Bohemia instead of Count John of Luxemburg. Typical medieval hero he paid little attention to this latter heritage. That overlord of Luxemburg became a world figure, *qui donnait tout et rien ne retenait hors*

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l'honneur. He made the maddest expedition to convert the heathen in East Prussia, where he lost an eye. Unskilful treatment deprived him of the other. He was to die sightless fighting on the side of the French at the battle of Crécy, 1346. Tradition has it that the Black Prince here plucked from his helmet the three black feathers and took his device '*Ich Dien*.'

However that may be, he returned to England with those feathers and that motto so flattering to rulers in the eye of peoples.*

In striking contrast to these magnificences is the fifteenth-century figure of Elizabeth of Goerlitz, again, as so often in Luxemburg's blood-drenched history, daughter and sole heiress of an overlord, Charles IV, second Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire to come from Luxemburg. She dragged her extravagant, ineffectual way through the Duchy during some forty-one years of its most tangled history. Harassed by debts, (her jewels mostly in pawn at the Hague) scheming kinsmen and fruitless negotiations, Elizabeth was married first in great splendour at Brussels to Anthony of Brabant of the Burgundian family, increasingly important in the history of

* His battle-scarred body was first laid in the Abbey of Altmunster in a crypt already prepared for it. When the Abbey was destroyed by French revolutionists his remains were transferred to the Grund (lower town of Luxemburg). They are supposed to have had eleven burial places. Frederick IV of Prussia built a large mausoleum at Cassel on the Sarre to receive them, where they now lie, since August 26th, 1838, the four hundred and ninety-second anniversary of the battle of Crécy. Last Count of Luxemburg (his successors taking the title of Duke), King of Bohemia and Poland, Marquis of Arlon, son of an Emperor, father of an Emperor, one of his sisters consort of a King of France, another that of a King of Hungary, whose daughter became Queen of France and her daughter in turn Queen of England, whose grandson was to unite upon his single head one imperial and four royal crowns, John the Blind's history is that of a large part of Europe during the first half of the fourteenth century.

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Europe. She received the Duchy in lieu of dowry and was always to hold it uncertainly as *engagiste* (tenant) though she took the title of Duchess of Luxemburg. Her second husband John of Bavaria, irritable, evil-living, semi-ecclesiastic, was released from his vows by the Council of Constance to espouse her. As a husband he was but one more witness to her continual ill-luck. In always disputed encumbency of the Duchy, Elizabeth finally went out of its gates after her many entrances to die in poverty, 1451, at Trèves. It was her nephew Sigismond who sold for 200,000 florins the Margravate of Brandenburg to a companion at arms, Frederick of Hohenzollern. Thus through the ancient and glorious house of Luxemburg soon to die out, the obscure dynasty of the Hohenzollerns by a chain of circumstances and a succession of wise and parsimonious sovereigns was destined to found the kingdom of Prussia, the *noyau de cristallization* of the German Empire of the nineteenth century.

Nearly three decades later appears another sole heiress, the daughter of Charles the Bold,* Marie, last true Burgundian, gifted, dark, dominating, possessive, wearing a long pointed head dress, hair and veil floating, throat bare, over her bosom a richly embroidered stuff; on her right wrist a falcon; as background her many-quartered coat of arms. Doomed to early death she was to carry, among her other estates, Luxemburg to the Hapsburgs through her

* Fell at the battle of Nancy, 1477. Tradition preserves his last words on that fatal field: '*à Luxembourg.*'

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marriage to Maximilian, son of Frederick III.* Her son Philip's marriage in 1496 to Juana, the Mad Queen, daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella, brought a magnificent heritage to her grandson, Charles. His earliest designation was Charles of Luxemburg, but all other titles were swallowed up in one of the most splendid known to history — Charles V. In his person, garbed in world-power, begin to pass those extraordinary figures of the Spanish domination.

Margaret of Austria,† Charles's aunt, was Regent of the Netherlands and Luxemburg till his majority. *Femme maîtresse*, with a taste for the arts as well as for war, she wrote verse, strengthened the fortress of the Bock and was concerned in some of the principal political compacts of the day. She it was who negotiated the Treaty of Cambrai between Francis I and Charles V, known as 'The Ladies' Peace'; she also in a more personal mood wrote her premature epitaph, bewailing her virginity:

*'Ci-gist Margot, la gentil demoiselle
Qu'a deux maris et encore est pucelle.'*

The Netherlands was the setting for the most spectacular of all Charles V's appearances — his abdication. It had been the country of his birth

* 'Three hundred years later Louis XV will say standing at Marie's tomb (Bruges) "Here is the origin of all our wars." Stripped of its epigrammatic quality, this judgment is in essence true. The bitter rivalry between the Houses of France and Austria which sprang from the marriage of 1477 will end only with the Treaty of Utrecht, 1713. More than one modern French historian has been tempted to go further and to include among its indirect consequences the European war of 1914-18.' D. B. Wyndham Lewis: *Some Aspects of Louis XI of France*.

† Belgium has lately (1930) celebrated the fourth centenary of Margaret's birth. She contributed largely to the splendour of Louvain, to the magnificence of Antwerp, to the glory of Brussels and Malines.

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(Ghent), of great victories and defeats. The vicissitudes of his wars with France were to cost the Duchy especially dear. During one of the many struggles between Francis I and himself fortune turned in the former's favour, the Dukes of Orleans and Guise at the head of 28,000 troops entering the city and occupying the whole territory. As usual the occupied paid the bill. Later Francis visited Luxemburg and was received by the inhabitants with great rejoicings. In his person and by his power they hoped that peace, so elusive in the stronghold might at last be theirs. But though masters changed, their miseries did not. . . .

On October 25th, 1555, in the great hall of the palace at Brussels, that gorgeous *Hôtel de Ville* known to us all, before a glittering assemblage Charles placed in the hands of his son Philip the sovereignty of half Europe. The central group was impressive. On Charles's right stood Philip, on his left his daughter Mary, Queen of Hungary. Between these latter stood the Prince of Orange, 'the immortal Prince,' on whose young shoulder the gout-crippled Emperor leaned. These men to right and left were to be the arbiters of the Netherlands, to drench them in blood, one in the cry of '*Por Dios y por el Rey*,' the other in that of 'Liberty.' As usual this goddess was very red. Each was to beseech the Lord of Armies. . . .

Born with his century, Charles was fifty-five years of age. He had been a man of fine physical endowments, of naturally noble gesture and mien, but was spent with wars and personal excesses, and, despite his imperial attire, seemed old as he stood before the

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assemblage. His hair once bright was grey, his eyes once piercing were watery, his forehead was still spacious and commanding, his nose proudly aquiline, his underlip, that Burgundian inheritance, which had always been heavy and protruding with time had grown more so. But he was King and Emperor. In few and solemn words he disposed of his vast and visible kingdom for that vaster and more shadowy in which he now desired to live, in order to 'put a reasonable period of contemplation between my active life and the grave.'

The chroniclers of the event recount that he fell to sobbing as he finished and the assemblage with him. . . . A month later he had gone, hastened by the appearance of a comet, dragging its fiery length across the autumnal Netherlands' sky, portending pestilence and wars together with the death of great princes. His last cry was '*me mea fata vocant*'—my Fates call me. In this he differed from no man born of woman, nor ruler, nor subject; their Fates call each and every one. . . .

Thus it was that in that year of 1555 one of the most enigmatic souls of history appears as overlord of Luxemburg — Philip II. Mysterious by character, by education and by calculation, posterity has done him small honour. Long known as 'the spider of the Escorial,' spinning schemes and vengeance in dark tower and vaulted passage, little by little he is, as archive chambers give up their secrets, being brought to light as a 'great Latin, as a great Occidental who a second time saved Europe from Islam and maintained against the Reformation the intellec-

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tual, æsthetic and religious traditions of Latinity.*

In 1559 the Duchess of Parma, natural daughter of their father by a woman of good estate, was appointed by Philip as Regent of the Netherlands and empowered to carry out all edicts regarding the Seventeen Provinces. She was thirty-seven when she arrived upon the scene and is said to have had a certain suave and imperial fascination, though masculine in appearance with a heavy *duvet* upon her upper lip. Her gestures were commanding. She was, however, to find herself in ceaseless conflict with William of Orange and despite her many gifts, her public service was of doubtful benefit to the Provinces. She had been married when twelve years old to an evil-living Medici over twice her age. At twenty she was espoused to a boy of thirteen, Ottavio Farnese.

Margaret made way in 1567 for Fernando Alvarez de Toledo, Duke of Alba then in his sixtieth year and accounted the most consummate general of his times. Blood-thirsty and sincere, or unmitigatedly blood-thirsty according to his historian, the Provinces were drenched in gore by his combats with the Prince of Orange.

He was succeeded by the 'Grand Commander,' Don Luis de Requesens y Cuñiga. All were weary of carnage. In the person of Requesens they thought to

* Louis Bertrand: *Philippe II* (1929). J. L. Motley celebrated for the diversity of his researches and the monotony of his deductions calls Philip a 'monster of hypocrisy,' 'a wonder of superstition with talents much below mediocrity.' Of him and Mary Tudor: 'that they considered the execution of unbelievers to be the most sacred duty imposed by the Deity upon anointed princes; to convert their Kingdoms into a Hell the surest means of winning Heaven for themselves.' Thus this great 'Spaniard-eater.' *Rise of the Dutch Republic* (1870).

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find a man of peace, greater in the council chamber than on the battlefield. However, like all the others, he preferred this latter. Anxiety concerning the siege of Ziericksee brought on a fever of which he died, March 5th, 1576. . . .

Now appears on the scene as Governor of the Provinces another ineffaceable figure of history — Don Juan of Austria, brother of Philip and last child of Charles V by a serving maid of Ratisbon. '*Bâtard romanesque, même romantique, l'enfant abandonné dont le malheureux sort émeut les cœurs sensibles*,'* he was of great beauty, with symmetrical features, very bright blue eyes and curling golden hair which he had an engaging way of pushing back from his forehead. He was skilful at games, of a gallant style, amiable and generous. . . . The full-length portrait in the Prado gives the most flattering idea of his person. Hands loaded with rings, covered with jewels, his wasp-like waist corsetted in a sumptuous doublet, sword at the side, he is the young lord, elegant and *raffiné*, of the times. His prestige was enormous, easily outshining his brother's darker and more subtle gifts. He had beaten the Moors in Andalusia and the Turks at the battle of Lepanto. Women were mad about him. With more heart and sensibility than head and judgment, he is said to have dreamed of marriage with Mary, Queen of Scots, of turning England back to the ancient Faith.

This was the man who long made his headquarters in the city of Luxemburg, with his secretary, Ascovedo. About them washed the dark Iberian tide, whose arts,

* Louis Bertrand: *Philippe II* (1929).

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customs, zeals, prejudices crested its blood-flecked waves. Wherever in the world that tide has flooded, receding it has left indelible traces.

Don Juan wrestling with the theological, political and geographical intricacies of the revolt of the Netherlands was no match for William of Orange. Though his intentions and his methods were gentler than those of Alva they were of equal unavail. . . . '*Por Dios y por el Rey*', that cry which had brought the New World under Spanish domination, was to lose to it that of the Old. Unscathed in battle, unmatched in tourney, Don Juan died in the splendour of his early manhood at Namur, tradition has it by poisoning, for there he mysteriously sickened and in a few days breathed out his soul, surrounded by his battle trophies, his gilded standards bearing the cross and the words '*In hoc signo vici Turcam, in hoc signo Hæreticos vincam.*'

His body was wrapt in a shroud of 'delicate Hollands, placed in a coffin covered within and without by black velvet,' and his last wish that his mortal remains be returned to Spain was fulfilled. He lies beside his imperial father in that sombre chapel of the Escorial.

It was from the gates of Namur that he had once gone to meet the fair Marguerite de Valois, 'travelling in a splendid litter, with gilt pillars, lined with scarlet velvet, entirely enclosed in glass.' As her glittering, oriflammed retinue came in sight Don Juan, followed by one of equal magnificence, sprang from his horse and bent his knee to welcome her. When she leaned to give him her cheek, *à la française*, in return

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salutation, two of the most beautiful beings of their time met in embrace. . . .

Then appears Alexander of Parma, Margaret's son by that youthful husband, Ottavio Farnese. He combined in his gifted and audacious person the qualities and defects of both races, and was the ablest of all those to whom Philip extrusted the government of the Provinces. On November 11th, 1565, his mother still regent, he was married to the handsome and pious Maria of Portugal, brought at vast expense by sea to Brussels. The nuptial banquet was held with the greatest splendour in that hall, again hung with the tapestry of Gideon, of the Hôtel de Ville, where, ten years before, Charles had relinquished the imperial power. . . .

Luxemburg was to be the setting for the greater part of the history of Alexander in the Netherlands. Impetuous, chivalrous and fearless on the field of battle he was a continual inspiration to flagging troops. He had, too, the pleasing habit of rewarding on the spot with jewel, weapon or ribbon from his own person the readiest followers. His talents were matched alone by those of his adversary, William of Orange. His portrait by Antony Mor at Parma shows him of a handsome, temperamental cast of countenance, slim, elegant, jewelled hand on jewelled sword-hilt, the gifted young lord of story. The eyes, however, are shrewd, wary, subtle.

From Luxemburg he went out to the victory of Gemblours, 1576, the streets of the city ringing to the sound of the hoofs of his cavalry and the cries of the populace.

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The citadel of the Bock knew a moment of glory if not of peace . . . It was under the administration of Alexander that the Prince of Orange was assassinated. Balthazar Gerard of Burgundian parentage took service in Luxemburg with Count Mansfeld. In March, 1584, 'the weather appearing fine,' he left Luxemburg, his purpose formed, though it was not until July 10th, that, hidden in the stairway of the Silent Prince's house at Utrecht, he was able to fire the fatal bullet as the Prince after dinner was passing to his private apartments above.

The ultimate end of 'tyrants' and 'lovers of liberty' seems to be so much the same that to the immortal question, *quid est veritas?* one adds *quid est libertas?*

Moving among all these figures is that of Count Peter Mansfeld, during sixty years Governor of Luxemburg and entrusted with supreme military control after the death of Requesens. He built the Renaissance palace in the city of Luxemburg still used by the sovereigns of the Duchy, filling it with objects of art, results of the commands or conquests of his master for whom he recruited troops, carried out edicts and collected taxes.

In through the gates of the city came, too, the many haughty, dark-eyed women of the Iberian and Italian Peninsulas, in their gilt coaches, decked out in their stiff and glittering brocades, shining like the sun in their splendid jewels.

Luxemburg passed to the Austrian Archdukes in 1598 as the portion of Isabella, daughter of Philip II, with reversal to the Spanish crown if she died without heirs. After the death of her husband, the Archduke

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Albert (1621), she was always coiffed and wimpled in religious garb, her only adornment a heavy jewelled cross upon her breast, as she entered the city gates, though her first entrance with him in 1599 was in the full splendour of her high estate. A natural ruler, she led troops, shared in festivities with her vivacious phrase, 'In summer to war, in winter to weddings', and, as far as in her lay, cared for the interests of Luxemburg. She was, too, the lady who vowed, ever vivaciously, not to change her chemise till Ostend was taken — a matter of three years. A somewhat dubious yellow, 'Isabella colour' became *à la mode*. She was also a patron of the arts, and when in 1609 Rubens wished to return to Rome she made it profitable for him, by wise subsidies, to remain in the Netherlands, naming him painter to the Court with residence at Antwerp.

After Isabella's death without issue and the Duchy's reversal to Spain, orphaned and defenceless, it was ravaged by the Thirty Years' War (1618-48). Soldiery from the adjacent Lorraine, troops from distant Poland and Croatia, equally despoiled it. Camping on the inhabitants, they raped, pillaged and burned. Whole villages disappeared from the map, to give place to plague and famine which in some regions carried off as much as two-thirds of the population. The army of defence was said to have been more obnoxious than the invaders. Provisions could occasionally be refused to the latter, never to the former. It took the Duchy, though no way concerned in it, two centuries to recover from the horrors of the senseless conflict.

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At the Peace of Westphalia (1648) Luxemburg reaped few advantages. The Kings of France and Spain were not to come to an understanding till eleven years later at the Treaty of the Pyrenees (1659). Even then Luxemburg continued to be so starved and ground to earth that the Provincial Council despairing of man's mercy appointed the Virgin as tutelary saint of the city. A solemn ceremony of consecration was celebrated in the presence of Prince de Chimay, then Governor, of the civil authorities, and a vast throng gathered from the farthest confines of the Duchy. Her misfortunes were almost never of her own making. But no man nor nation escapes its destiny. Invasion has been the immemorial lot of Luxemburg. The domain of beautiful princesses, coveted by great warriors, love-groans and battle-cries have for ever resounded there. Crusaders were early recruited within its confines. Godfrey de Bouillon of the nearby Duchy, entered the Castle of Hollenfels calling Lord John from the arms of his lovely wife to follow him to the Holy Lands. . . .

In the World War some fought in the French ranks, some in the German. Their souls, bleeding depositories of Gallo-Roman and Teutonic inheritances, are turned now West, now East — for Luxemburg's geography is implacable.

In the third quarter of the seventeenth century the 'Sun King' began, paradoxically, to darken the eastern frontier of France, putting forth claims through various female heirs to a portion of the Spanish provinces. Luxemburg lost permanently in this way parts of the ancient Duchy — Thionville,

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Carignan, Ivoix, Daimvilliers, etc., being swept into the confines of France. The war of the Spanish Succession gave Louis XIV a further pretext for occupying the whole Duchy which was administered by French governors for many uneasy years. They brought with them wives and mistresses, entering magnificently, introduced furtively.

The Duchy was indelibly reddened and blackened by the redoubtable Marshal Duke de Boufflers who, with *pleins pouvoirs* of destruction, laid waste those cresting castles of its many hills, whose earliest foundations dated back through misty centuries — Hollenfels, Bourscheid, Vianden, Brandenburg and all the others. These ruins belong, many of them, to the period after the destruction of Heidelberg and the Baden castles under Turenne.

The sack of the Palatinate, so intimately bewailed and recorded in the voluminous correspondence of the Roi-Soleil's sister-in-law, Elizabeth Charlotte, Princess Palatine,* was not more spectacular than that of Luxemburg. 'To this day visitors to the Duchy cannot take a country walk without encountering traces of de Bouffler's work.' It was on a sunny fourth of June, 1684, that Marshal de Créquy finally entered the conquered city. The Spanish garrison, in recognition of its gallant resistance, was allowed to march out with colours flying and drums beating. Of the four thousand who had begun the defence four hundred were left. The 37,000 bullets and 10,000

* The ugly, brilliant 'Liselotte' who considered Louis XIV the most agreeable and seductive of men and monarchs, until 'spoiled' by Madame de Maintenon. Madame de Sévigné supposes her to have been in love with him.

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bombs launched by the invaders had done their work. Their own losses, too, were great, for it is reckoned that this campaign cost the French 8,000 men. When the 'Sun King' bringing with him authority and discipline entered the city three years later, 1687, he was hailed with a vast enthusiasm. Some historians reckon that the advent in the land of the Grand Monarque not only with generals and bombs, but with men of the arts and letters (Racine was in his suite), was the 'beginning of that curious French affinity, which considering old scores seems misplaced.'* Luxemburg's heart may turn to France, but it is France who has most often wounded and scarred it. She continues, however, to nourish a love easily warming to passion for this latter, with a quite platonic appreciation of Germany. The homely saying 'a woman, a dog and a hickory tree' etc. is not misplaced here.

The reign of Charles VI and that of his daughter Maria Theresa were to cover nearly the whole of the eighteenth century from 1714 to the preludes of the French Revolution, the Duchy by the Treaty of Utrecht being tossed for the third time into the hands of Austria, from the ephemeral grasp of Maximilian, Elector of Bavaria. It took on new life under the great Empress and her deputies at Brussels, though she herself never put foot in it. This august, fecund, administrative-minded ruler of warm heart and vast domains continued the tradition of her father who is said to have caused Luxemburg 'to raise her defiled head from the dust.' She made her daughter Christine

* T. H. Passmore: *In Further Ardenne*, London (1905).

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governor of Brussels, with her husband, Albert of Saxe-Teschen. The easy, pleasant claim of this gentleman to the attention of posterity is that he kept a diary, well supplemented by the voluminous correspondence of the ministers, in especial of Trauttmansdorf and Cobenzl, of his brother-in-law, Joseph II. This monarch, half bigot, half encyclopædist, of restless habit, sowing abundantly, reaping scantily, was, when he made his famous *tournée* of the Netherlands, the first overlord to set foot in the Duchy for over a century and a half. Undertaking the journey almost indecently soon after the death of his illustrious mother, at whose strong apron strings he had long tugged, thinly disguised as Count Falkenstein, he arrived in Luxemburg on May 31st, 1781, leaving it three days later. Laden with documents and petitions, overflowing with promises, he did little to help and nothing to avert its destiny. This latter cannot be reproached him, for time hid the French Revolution, so supremely, intimately disastrous for Luxemburg, just behind its veil.

Joseph proceeded rapidly to Brussels where his sister Marie Christine was exercising with a certain wisdom and diligence the powers bestowed on her by their mother. These he considerably curtailed, though he was himself to lose by high-handed acts the sovereignty of the House of Hapsburg over the Belgic lands. Elder sister of Marie Antoinette, Christine was agreeable of face and manners, of cultivated tastes and irreproachable conduct. She collected books and engravings, encouraged the arts, and there is even extant a series of drawings done by

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her to illustrate Don Quixote. Lonely and nostalgic in Brussels and Luxemburg, regretting her pleasant life in the Hungarian capital, Pressburg, Christine wrote many letters, in which the diarist figures as 'my incomparable husband,' and in which events are perceivable, now as at the large end of a telescope, now at the small. The journey to Luxemburg from Brussels could be done easily stopping a couple of nights. Those capacious berlines of the times drawn by six horses with outriders and guards were often to be seen rolling in over the viaduct bearing their caped and hooded royal occupants.

To the vast Hapsburg dominions Archduke Leopold of Tuscany, favourite brother of Christine, became heir on the death of Joseph II (February 20th, 1790). She writes, again to Princess Liechtenstein, of Marie Antionette's failure to escape from France. 'You will have heard that they were stopped hardly four miles from the frontier; if they had only taken another route they would have been safe like Monsieur* and his wife. I am inconsolable about my sister and her innocent little ones.'

The single aim of the French royal family was to get into the not too distant territory of Marie Antoinette's brother, Leopold II, on his death (1792) become that of her nephew, Francis II, who though more warlike than his father had still less at heart the safety of his aunt whom he had never seen.

* The Count of Provence (Louis XVIII) married Marie Josephine daughter of Victor Amadeus III King of Sardinia. Later this King lost to France Savoy and the County of Nice (1792), while the campaigns of 1793-4 gave to the French the Alps from Mont Blanc to the sea, formally assured to them after the Armistice of Cherasco (1796).

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However it was finally decided to throw 'a cordon of loyal Austrian troops about Luxemburg.'

It was in the Duchy that money for the use of the doomed family was placed, of which Count de Mercy-Argenteau, Maria Theresa's greatest envoy and Count von Fersen, romantic figure in Marie Antoinette's life, were guardians. It was also the point at which the friendship of these two gentlemen cooled.

Goethe was in the suite of the Duke of Weimar, when the Duke, desirous of helping restore Louis XVI to his throne, entered the city. Not alone man but nature was against this expedition in aid of the doomed king. The weather, a season of uninterrupted rains, seemed as Goethe remarked 'to be on the side of the Sansculottes.' On October 14th, 1792, the poet found himself in the city, which in spite of fever, dysentery and crowding in of refugees he carefully explored, greatly impressed by the beauty of the gardens, the strength of the fortifications. 'Here is so much of grandeur and charm, so much of earnestness mingled with sweetness that one could wish for a Poussin to depict the scenes. . . .'

After the battle of Jemmapes, November 6th, 1792, Mercy-Argenteau, Envoy to Paris not only of Maria Theresa but of Joseph II, of Leopold II, then of this latter's son Francis II to Brussels, charged with all negotiations, recommended Christine to sign certain concessions. But too late. 'The French deluge has already swamped our land,' she writes. Three days later she left the Brabant capital for ever, to return to Vienna with her 'incomparable husband' now become 'my invalid.' It was on this winter journey

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that they heard of the execution of Louis XVI (January 21st, 1793) and Christine became the prey of a fully justified anxiety for her sister.

The outriders of the French Revolution in Luxemburg were the fleeing French nobility and clergy passing through the Duchy seeking refuge in Germany. Their first halting place was Coblenz, the Elector of Trèves making them welcome at his court. These flights across their territory of men flying from their 'brothers' were nothing new to Luxemburg, neither — though their form was unimaginable — were the acts of those *Tricoteuses* of The Terror who as *vivandières* accompanied their men as they pillaged and laid waste church, monastery and convent.

*'Thank God, Luxemburg holds out,' exclaims Trauttmansdorf somewhat prematurely, as he watched the first French wave roll over the Austro-Belgic domain. And Austria was to hold the Duchy through the era of the Belgic United States to the beginning of the second French occupation . . . A letter written from Luxemburg June 27th, 1793, contains the following passage: 'The French have just made a fresh incursion into the province of Luxemburg where they have pillaged various churches, among others the rich abbey of Orval . . . The Abbey of Clairefontaine has been totally devastated.' . . . By the autumn of 1794 the Duchy was hedged in by hostile troops, Mayence and Luxemburg being the only cities on the left of the Rhine not in French hands. General René was ordered to reduce the fortress. The besiegers remained half a year before the gates and became

• Ruth Putnam: *Luxemburg and her Neighbors*, New York (1919).

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L'Armée devant Luxembourg. It finally fell to the French, and the Hapsburgs withdrew from the fortress of the Bock never to return.

The Convention was officially informed of the fact in a letter written on the following day from 'Itzig before Luxemburg' by General Hatry:

'Citizen Representatives: Finally this famous fortress of Luxemburg belongs to the Republic, and the last column of Austrians evacuated it on the 24th Prairial at five o'clock in the morning. I send you twenty-four flags and a standard which the garrison, 12,396 men, laid at the feet of us Republicans . . . *Salut et fraternité.* Hatry'

Scarcely however were the Austrians out of the city when the streets were placarded with documents stating that an indemnity of 1,500,000 francs must be paid within three days. 'Liberty' trees were planted whenever the Liberators found time. To provide quarters for the administration of the new order the Capuchins and the Récollets of the city were commanded to evacuate their convents, relinquish their churches as the army needed them to 'establish therein grain, flour and fodder markets, as well as depots for provisioning the garrison.' The first order was impossible materially, the last repugnant spiritually.

After its conquest by the Revolutionary Army Luxemburg as *Le Département des Forêts* passed into a strange phase of its history. Two officials were sent from Paris to 'make the Republic well-respected and loved, to foil the counter-revolution and the intrigues of the malevolent, to maintain order and

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tranquillity among the citizens, to assure them prompt justice in answer to their complaints, to accelerate tax returns, in short to proceed carefully between the shoals of despotism and of anarchy.'

Then came the commissioner of the Directory, Nicolas Vincent Legier, typical, full-grown son of the Revolution. In the Department of Forests, 'he was most anxious to show the benevolence of Republican institutions and to establish a new regime without the use of harsh measures.' But the difficulties in the way of transforming the Luxemburgers into good Republicans were insurmountable. The oath required by each new citizen received, *malgré lui*, into the Republic contained phrases impossible of acceptance by the Luxemburgers, children above all of the Church, their prayers during centuries having alone made their miseries bearable. The story becomes that of a deeply religious people on one hand, on the other a determined effort to 'root out superstition,' to 'awaken public opinion, to inspire an implacable hatred of royalty and to illumine in the hearts of the citizens the love of liberty,' etc. etc. . . .

With set teeth and tight lips the Duchy changed the words Thermidor and Messidor into 'Schnorridor and Fressidor.'

'Rokelspir,' as Robespierre was called, became a synonym of Satan. The anniversary of the execution of Louis XVI (January 21st) was celebrated in Luxemburg on January 24th, 1796, *la fête de la juste punition du roi des Français*, as this new feast day, placed startlingly in the old calendar, was known. The programme ended with the singing of the *Marseillaise* and the

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Chant du Départ. La Joyeuse Entrée,* long dear to the Brabançons and the Luxemburgers was abolished. The old cathedral of Notre Dame dedicated to the Mater Afflictorum became the Temple of the Supreme Being, Saint Eustache, the Temple of Agriculture and other lesser churches became temples of this and that. The Luxemburgers, religious innately and by such long heredity, illy disguised their repugnance to the new order, their doubts as to the value of 'liberation' when their churches were used as barracks and their century-old monasteries and convents were looted. Already in 1793 the glorious abbeys of Clairefontaine and Orval had been fired. Legier writes that 'the people are mostly patient and capable of sacrifice.' He expresses a fear that '*la ci-devant Belgique et le pays de Luxembourg seraient restitués à leurs anciens tyrans.*' Another difficulty in getting conscientious and able men to fill public positions was the article expressing hatred of royalty — *haine de la Royauté*. During centuries their rulers had been so by the grace of God, and however strange the decrees of God as to their overlords, they preferred them to the blasphemies and tyrannies of men.

They resented profoundly being forced to labour on Holy Days, or inversely to wearing their Sunday clothes on days commemorating deeds abhorrent to the Church. The climax was the conscription of the youth of the land to fight in support of theories that

* This charter had come down to them from the days of Wenzel of Luxemburg (1355), son of John the Blind. When he and his young wife, Jeanne of Brabant, made their entry into Brussels, they solemnly swore to observe all the provisions of that charter, meant to protect Brabant and the other provinces from the undue encroachments of their sovereigns.

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were hated as soon as understood. ‘“*Point de Français, ni d’origine, ni d’opinion*” is their rallying cry,’ writes Legier.* But worse was to follow. There came into being the famous Kloeppelkrieg or ‘Cudgel-war’ from the rude instruments used, scythes, axes, hammers, poles. Clervaux, in the sterner Oesling region was its birth-place. Church doors were wrenched open to cries of *er get fir de Glaf*, here goes for the Faith, to the same they hacked down the ‘Liberty’ trees. With these rude means of defence they tried desperately to fight against the cannon balls and bayonets of the Revolutionary Army. Their blood reddened the soil of their fatherland. A monument at Clervaux shows bowed peasants kneeling before the uplifted Host, with the heroic motto ‘Better to fall in battle than to live and witness the woes of our people and of the Church.’ And again: *Wir können nicht lügen* (we cannot lie).

The Treaty of Campo Formio, October 17th, 1797, gave over Luxemburg formally to the French Republic as well as the ci-devant Belgian provinces known as the Austrian Netherlands, Austria agreeing to the settlement. But it was by the Treaty of Lunéville, February 9th, 1801, that the Hapsburgs gave up all pretensions to Luxemburg, for themselves and their heirs in perpetuity. There remained, however, a warm, underlying Hapsburg sentiment. Two generations lived which had endured the excesses of the Revolutionary Army and had known the relatively peaceful, fecund days of the great Empress, when

* Legier’s report April 10th, 1798.

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according to a popular saying the peasants 'had ploughed with silver shares.'

A poet of the Duchy expressed himself unequivocally in the well-known lines:

*'Sum petra: petrino non crescunt lilia fundo;
In petris aquilae nidificare solent.'*

('Rock am I: upon a rocky base lilies thrive not best;
On lofty crags let eagles build their nest.')

On June 23rd, 1802, Napoleon set out with Josephine for Belgium, but he did not reach Luxemburg till some time later when he was already Emperor-Elect. Then the *élite* of the Duchy met and escorted him across their territory (October 9th, 1804). The arrival of Pius VII in Paris, December 2nd 1804, for his coronation was further reassuring news to the God-fearing Duchy.

When Napoleon came to take the Belgic provinces into consideration he remarked to Josephine 'These people are devout and under the influence of priests. It will be a good plan to have a long séance in Church, to caress the clergy and thus gain support.'* What was sauce for Belgium was also sauce for Luxemburg. The people began to take heart.

When Napoleon in 1810-1811 made another state journey he was accompanied by his Empress Marie Louise in the hope that she, as a Hapsburg, would be a high card in the game where the Hapsburgs, especially the women, had played popular and often brilliant

* Madame de Remusat.

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roles. From Brussels he bade her write to her father that she had danced with his Flemings. He was very gracious on his entrance into Luxemburg. Legend has it that when the keys of the city were offered him from the fingers of the Virgin, whose statue was clad in a gown embroidered by Maria Theresa, he refused to accept them, saying 'they could not be in better hands.'

At the Congress of Vienna the familiar carving knife was again taken to a still-bleeding Europe. There was a session on March 23rd, 1815, which especially concerned Luxemburg. Presided over by the Duke of Wellington, Prince Metternich, Count Rassamoufsky, Prince Hardenberg, Prince Talleyrand, Baron Humboldt, Count Nesselrode, Baron Wessenberg completed it. Here among other things Wellington repeated Article xxix providing that certain portions of the Duchy of Luxemburg should form one of the States of the German Confederation, and that it should be ceded to the Sovereign Prince of the United Provinces to be possessed by him under the title of Duke of Luxemburg. He added a motion that this last title should be changed to Grand Duke of Luxemburg. The various royal and imperial masters of these gentlemen then authorized in more or less categorical terms the assumption of the titles of King of the Netherlands and Grand Duke of Luxemburg by the Sovereign Prince.

Part of the Duchy of Bouillon and part of the Principality of Liége were added to Luxemburg, while lopping off Thionville and various other territories, then it was assigned formally to William I

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King of the Netherlands in return for the German territories of the House of Orange-Nassau which Napoleon had confiscated in 1806 and which were given by the Congress to the King of Prussia.

Thus was realized, after a strange fashion, the old Valois dream of a Kingdom of the Netherlands. Thus, too, was born the present Grand Duchy of Luxemburg, its main features, so scarred yet so lovely, resembling those of to-day. More than a century has passed over them without materially altering them.

Yet another conflict to which Luxemburg was foreign was to beat at its doors: the Revolt of the Belgic Provinces in 1830 — ending in that divorce between two incompatibilities, Belgium and Holland, married with some pomp at the Congress of Vienna. Language, religion, national impulse were all against this union. Relatives, friends and enemies in the shape of European powers and their covenants further embittered it. Out of all the figures and the wranglings finally emerged Leopold of Saxe-Coburg. Widowed, Protestant, an alliance was arranged for him with a daughter of Louis Philippe. German by inheritance, linked to England by his past and his present, to France by marriage, Leopold was the predestined solvent of difficulties. Formally recognized as King on July 21st, 1830; he speedily became more Belgian than the Belgians and was to show himself a master of practical politics.

An effort was made to include Luxemburg in this new kingdom of the Belgians, but in 1831 the Powers through depriving it of the beautiful and fertile Walloon section in Belgium's favour, decided that the

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Grand Duchy should be retained by the King of Holland. It was thus long ruled by the princes of the House of Orange who brought to it sometimes casually, fluidly, sometimes accentingly, indelibly their habits and customs.

William II, that Prince of Orange who had fought at Waterloo, greatly loved the beautiful Duchy. He often visited it, modernized its constitution and placed it under the profitable German Zollverein, February 8th, 1843. Though rated by Treitschke as 'fantastic, restless, changeable as the day,' his name is graven in the heart of the people and in the bronze of the great monument raised to him in the Place Guillaume.

The Treaty of London May 11th, 1867, was most important in the history of the Duchy. It carved out its final shape upon the map of Europe. The rights of the House of Orange-Nassau were maintained. Luxemburg was made an open city; the fortifications were demolished. In the presence of a French and of a Prussian officer the walls of one of the proudest and noblest citadels known to history were blown to bits 1870 left Luxemburg untouched.

The consorts of the Dutch King Grand Dukes of the nineteenth century rarely showed themselves in the Duchy. Exception must be made of Amélie of Saxe-Weimar, beloved and popular consort of Prince Henry, brother of William III, who was during long years Governor of Luxemburg (1849-1879). She died in 1872. Four years later the Luxemburgers in testimony of their veneration and gratitude raised to her the only monument to a woman existing in the Duchy.

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On the death of William III in 1890, his daughter, Wilhelmina ten years of age became heiress, under the regency of her mother, Emma of Waldeck-Pyrmont, to the throne of the Netherlands, to which at the age of eighteen she acceded, but according to the provisions of the Salic Law the Grand Duchy of Luxemburg passed to William's next male heir, Adolph I, Duke of Nassau of the Walramian branch of the family.

We have already seen the ageing Adolf with his second wife, Adelheid Marie of Anhalt, that descendant of Field-M Marshals and Generals, admired for her good looks, counted on for her good sense, coming in and out of the city followed by their son William whose consort, Marie Anne of Braganza, was to bring that warm, somewhat disturbing southern strain to the House of Nassau.

Then Marie Adelaide.

CHAPTER V

CROWN, SCEPTRE, STAR

*'Other peoples are ruled by princes,
Luxemburg by an angel'*

MARIE ADELAIDE's accession to the throne and the taking of the royal oath was fixed for Tuesday, June 18th, 1912, four days after her coming of age. It was, too, prophetically the date of the battle of Waterloo, the vast reverberations of whose cannon through ninety-seven years were soon to be lost in those, still vaster, of the Great War. She was, like all the women rulers of her land, whose blood-stained key to East and West she held, born to troubled times.

Brightly en fleshed in her beauty, lightly clad in her eighteen years, haloed by her innocence, she was an irresistible apparition in the land of her birth and heritage. In her veins ran more and more warmly that beautifying blood of the Braganzas. It mingled, creating strange cross-currents and eddies, with that ponderable Nassau strain which was to give a certain reasonableness to her deep-lying *Herrschersucht*, urge to rule, deathless quality of the so-long dispossessed house from which her mother had sprung.

She was above medium height, slender, symmetrically formed and her gait had an undulating, quiet rhythm. Her small head was crowned by a wealth of naturally curling golden-brown hair with much life

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and light in it. A fair skin of a peculiarly velvety texture set off the beauty of her large, dark-blue, long-lashed eyes which were to have a way of looking out upon the world of men and affairs with a quiet, trusting expression, yet with reticence. She had very white, regular teeth in a red, full-lipped mouth, the upper lip especially being generously modelled. Those pearly teeth gave her smile a peculiar, bright charm. Her feet were very small and from her eleventh year she never changed the size of her shoes. Her hands, too, were small but they had been frost-bitten in childhood when at play in the snow at Hohenburg and were apt to swell and redden in cold weather; the traditionally prescribed wearing of gloves on all occasions when she came in contact with the outside world made this of slight import. Her soft hair was at that time dressed most unbecomingly, drawn up as it was over one of those hideous wire frames in vogue during the last pre-war years and which royalty with its customary conservatism was the last to adopt but also the last to abandon. But even that could not disguise its soft, luxuriant beauty. In a gauze veil, over hair drawn back, enveloped in a brocaded mantle she would have resembled with her richly-modelled mouth, her broadly-placed eyes, her full nostrils, her long neck any of the Botticelli Madonnas. On that eighteenth day of June she was, however, dressed in a somewhat thick white lace gown from the celebrated Vienna house of Spitzer, atavistically reminiscent of the Hapsburg rule. This was completed by an immense white hat of the most unfortunate form, cruelly defacing her loveliness (though it could not

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conceal it), trimmed as it was with a too-generous supply of the now *demodés* and forbidden aigrettes. A single row of ancestral pearls encircled her neck encased by a high collar held rigidly in place by one of those dreadful wire neck-supporters, completely disfiguring to a whole generation of young women. But any fashion has the value of its evanescence and about her figure lay, enhancingly, the spell of youth, the power of symbol.

As the young ruler started out on that long predestined day from Castle Berg, Luxemburg was shining in its peculiar early summer ambience. Bright sun, misty blues, colour-shot greys set off lush pasture fields, dark forest stretches, steep hills becrested with their ruined, legend-bearing castles, pale, vine-planted banks of silvery rivers, smoky glitter of modern manufacturing towns. A delicate yet radiant beauty enveloped both ruler and land. And everywhere the scent of roses, natural odour of the Duchy.

In Domeldingen the train stopped, the sovereign descended. After acknowledging with that bright, youthful, as yet unknown smile the enthusiastic greetings of her people, she stepped, followed by the eighty-year old, imposing-figured Baroness von Preen, *Grande Maîtresse de la Cour* under four rulers, into the blue, silk-lined coach that awaited her, drawn by the traditional four horses, and proceeded amid the ever-increasing cheers of the populace, over the high, vast viaduct, from which a large portion of the 999 square miles of her territory could be seen.

As she was driven into the ancient city dyed in the orange of the House of Nassau, her people could well

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cry the refrain of their anthem *Mir welle bleiwe wat mer sinn* (we want to remain what we are). The hopes that every Luxemburger had borne in his heart from the hour of her birth had blossomed. 'May heaven grant thee a glorious and peaceful reign.' 'May God keep thee.' 'May He grant that thou keep-est the love of thy people who rejoice with thee to-day,' they shouted in German, French and patois. The Luxemburgers have, as we know, the habit of linking the name of God with that of their mortal rulers. Once again the 'little Gibraltar' was hung with the bright tapestries of beauty and romance, hiding dark outrages of wars and time — concealing those to come. Without political pretensions nor any desire of enlargement Luxemburg only asked of her strong and restless neighbours to be allowed to work out her destiny in peace, according to the genius of her people, who by their admixture of blood present such diverse and productive qualities. On that eighteenth day of June her relations with the contiguous states were of the best. The Duchy seemed at last secure from mishap, destined for permanent peace, for an ever-increasing prosperity.

The slender, white-robed figure of Luxemburg's virgin ruler sitting very erect, wearing across her young breast the broad orange ribbon of the House of Nassau, its star over her confiding heart, was a sight to quicken the most sluggish pulse, bring a tear to the most cynical eye. She was both guarantor and guarantee. Their own.

At last the great blue coach, unseen of a whole generation, stopped before the Chamber of Deputies.

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Marie Adelaide was trembling as she descended, but soon controlling her emotion she went up the thickly-carpeted steps with a graceful, noble mien — more of trust than of pride was in it. Entering the great hall after the protocolary greetings she firmly, lightly ascended the steps of the throne. Looking about her appealingly, her white-gloved hands tightly clasped, she bowed to the President, to the Deputies, to the diplomats accredited to the Duchy. The hand that reached for her speech carried by her lady-in-waiting shook slightly. But when she found herself facing the assemblage, with what she considered a God-committed duty immediately before her, a sudden change came over her. It was felt by all that where there had seemed to be only a shy and beautiful maiden, there was a chief and ruler — a personality. The old statesmen of the Bock 'sat up.'

After that glance at the assembly she began composedly to speak. Her hand no longer trembled. She had what the French call *la voix grave* and it was graver, warmer, fuller than its wont in that moment. For weeks the castle had resounded to the phrases of the speech rehearsed by her French lady-in-waiting, Countess de Carcqueray. Its modest yet earnest context had been composed by Paul Eyschen, wise enough to allow some touching and girlish modifications by his new sovereign, as easily distinguishable as white from black.

'Gentleman,' she began, 'deeply moved I stand for the first time in the midst of you, the representatives of the land. The sentiments of devotion that you have always expressed for my father, for my grandfather,

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your appreciation of the noble feelings that inspired my deeply-loved mother as well as my honoured grandmother give me the certainty, gentlemen, that their child can also count on your entire devotion.

‘To-day I am doubly sensible of the misfortune of never having been initiated by my father into public affairs, but guided by your wisdom, I hope, nevertheless, to prove worthy of the high duties that have fallen to my lot.

‘My first obligation is to conform to the fifth article of the Fundamental Law. I swear to observe the Constitution and laws of the Grand Duchy of Luxemburg, to maintain national independence and territorial dignity as well as public and private liberty and the rights of each and all of my subjects, to employ for the conservation and increase of prosperity, public and private — as is the duty of a good sovereign — all the means the law allows.

‘I swear to this, so help me God.’

At the moment for the taking of the oath she arose, her youth and grace reinforced by something sterner. In visible emotion which communicated itself to all present she raised her right hand with the noblest of gestures. She ceased to look at the assemblage of mortals; her beautiful blue eyes were raised to heaven.

A pause, then in increasing emotion, though without embarrassment she began again:

‘It would be rash for me to attempt to outline to-day a programme of my reign. I will confine myself, gentlemen, to telling you my aspirations and my hopes.

‘It is my deepest wish to deserve the title of a good

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sovereign in accordance with the oath I have just taken. I promise to interest myself in all, to be fair, easy of access, ready to give aid. Is not the endeavour to realize within practical limits the Beautiful, the True and the Good the most magnificent jewel for any crown?

'On the grand ducal palace there is a bas-relief of John the Blind with his device *Ich Dien*, which my honoured father also took for his. On the same wall are engraved the features of our great ancestor Henry VII with his favourite device: *Judicate juste* (Judge justly). According to their shining examples, zeal to render decisions in conformity with the rules of Justice and Equity shall inspire all my acts. Law and public weal alone shall be my guides. Oh, to judge justly. Should not justice be for all and is it not the guardian of the weak? Economic inequality among mankind is the grave preoccupation of our age. Till now, social peace, so ardently desired has been but a fleeting ideal . . . But is not Justice deeply enough anchored in all hearts for a happy appeal to it? And can we not hope for the action slow but sure of its eternal laws?

'To reign for and with the people was my father's aim. He was wont to say "It must be hand-in-hand with the people that we attack the problems of the future." This is the heavy charge I assume with my paternal heritage. Your enlightened patriotism, gentlemen, will aid me in doing it honour. And Heaven must bless my efforts.'

Again expressing her gratitude towards all who had offered sympathy in her bereavement, the grave-eyed, low-voiced maiden continued: 'International treaties

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guaranteeing the independence and neutrality of the Grand Duchy are the true source of our prosperity, but they also impose upon us an obligation towards Europe. . . . Let us fulfil our duty. Let us act so that no suspicion can be cast on the rectitude of our intentions. I love my country. I am proud and happy to bear its name and its crown. I desire no other joy than to serve it and in co-operation with you, to assure its prosperity. To the hand of a young girl the guardianship of the flag is entrusted. I will hold it high and with the aid of God I will do combat for its honour.

‘Daughter of the House of Nassau, I, like my fathers will be faithful to the noble device of our House: *Je maintiendrai.*’

These solemn words expressive of an understanding of her place and duties, coming from those rosy lips produced an indescribable effect upon the assemblage. In that moment the Luxemburgers stood united to a man about the throne on which sat the young figure of an ancient race. Gone were the amblings of that aged grandsire, the drab days of the long paternal illness, the perfunctory appearances of the regent. In flesh and blood they beheld the sign and symbol of their independence flung about with the potent magic of beginnings, beauty, innocence, romance, for ever enchanting to man’s heart. None could help but wonder what destiny held in store for the youngest, loveliest, most innocent of all the rulers of Europe — Marie Adelaide, Grand Duchess of Luxemburg, Duchess of Nassau, Countess Palatine of the Rhine, Burgravine of Hammerstein, Lady of Mahlberg, Wiesbaden and those many other titles born of the

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diversities of time and war — by the grace of God. . . .

Towards evenfall she returned to Castle Berg. The road was still lined with her acclaiming subjects; she was still bending her graceful head to right and left, still smiling her rosy-lipped, pearly-toothed smile, but her face had grown very pale under the ponderous, befeathered hat . . . The sun of the day of her accession to power had set. Luxemburg was without enemies; cradled against the heart of a peaceful Europe, its tranquil, modest destiny seemed at last to arouse no jealousies. The loveliest of its roses, without spot or blemish, had bloomed before all eyes. . . .

It is said that she fell into one of those deep sadnesses of early youth that night and asked: 'Is *this* glory?'

CHAPTER VI

A COURT IN MINIATURE

(1912 - 1914)

'Of easy, shining things'

THE picture of the daily round of Marie Adelaide's little court in those pre-war days is simple, its figures few, its background uncomplicated, resembling that of any small German principality of the eighteenth century, except for the varying light and shade cast by the adjacence of France, Belgium, Holland, the Rhinlands, Alsace, and also that there seem to have been no scandals. An aged ruler, a decade-long bed-ridden ruler, a regent-wife, giving herself passionately, exclusively over to the duties attendant on her husband's illness, six beautiful girls emerging into or out of adolescence whose natural and circumstantial virtue clad them as in a seamless armour, where was stuff for scandal? Intrigue of necessity wherever there is power to be wielded — favours to be sought.

The situation continued to be ideal for the brilliant, autocratic 'Monsieur Eyschen' whose authority still covered those many departments. In the smiling person of his young ruler he thought to wield under a lovelier guise the powers of the past. The Grand Duchess-regent had left everything in his hands; she

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was, as she said of herself, '*ausser dem Bild,*' out of the picture, during the years of her regency, more personal duties than those of government absorbing her. The famous Servais, long-lived, faithful servant of Luxembourg, had administered it without catastrophe under four sovereigns. Paul Eyschen can be pardoned for thinking that he saw history agreeably repeating itself in his own person and destiny. The sun that was setting upon his life was red and warm, indicating continued good weather.

The other Ministers of State, the court officials were men showing their mixed blood — German, Flemish, Belgian, French, Dutch, here and there a darker, persistent Burgundian and Spanish strain. The various social elements resembled them. The fibre of each and all was tightly woven of the colours of the banners of those nations which had besieged, occupied and possessed Luxembourg. Their unifying sentiment was love of their tiny land stamped with that many-tinted dye upon the map of Europe, and respect for the dynasty of the House of Orange-Nassau as a condition of its continued independence. At this latter point the most diverse political shades were merged into their primary colours, the governmental spectrum being of a complete visibility.

The lesser figures at the head of affairs were for the most part sound, not over-quickly moving beings, largely educated at Louvain — indeed the intelligentsia of the period was quite French in thought and policy. It was fully agreed, however, in their diverse opinions and wills that a dynasty was the least expensive as well as the most stable form of government for Luxem-

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burg, given her special economic problems and her peculiar geographical position.

The court routine necessarily took its hue and shape from the habits and temperament of its young ruler. During years its natural activities had been in abeyance because of the slippered old age of Adolf and the absorption of the regent in that long, dull, seemingly endless illness of her husband, the beginnings of which were evident and accurately diagnosed shortly after his accession to the throne.

The business of the day was dispatched either in that gloomy Renaissance palace built by Count Peter Mansfeld or in the cheerful, many-windowed, beturreted and betowered castle of Colmar-Berg. After her accession Marie Adelaide moved into her father's apartments in the latter dwelling. Till then she had shared a room with her sister Charlotte. As she never sought to give the dwellings she inhabited any impress of her personality, the paternal rooms remained, with the exception of a few objects of girlish use, just as she found them. Neither in the palaces and castles over which she became mistress did she ever make any changes or additions; as long as they contained the things strictly necessary for her requirements and living she was content. When she left them they bore no trace of her selfless occupancy. She seems, however, to have had a natural taste for pictures of which there are many valuable ones in the town residence gathered together by her grandfather Adolf or having been previously in the Luxemburg and Nassau inheritances. She also had a flair for good furniture, readily placing it in its epoch. 'This is late

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Directoire or early Empire' she would say with a justified finality. But she made no effort to surround herself with things of beauty. Castle Berg was encumbered with objects in malachite — candelabra, clocks and vases; commodes and tables in Boule come from the bridal dowry of the Grand Duke Adolf's first wife, that early-dead Elizabeth Michailowna. In the dining room were magnificent crystal chandeliers also coming from this princess, as was the very beautiful Empire furniture of the best period, still covered with its indestructible striped silk, which furnished the billiard-room. To this apartment the grand ducal women and their ladies-in-waiting, whether they played billiards or not had the habit of repairing after the evening meal, entering it headed by the Grand Duchess Marie Anne in strict sequence of rank or seniority. No mistakes were made in this order which functioned with the certainty of the stars of heaven. Each lady carried that inevitable fan, wore those inevitable white glacé kid gloves, which latter, however, after the outbreak of the war were never put on. The Countess Anna always of sprightly and independent mode of thought, instituted a way of doubling up a single one to make it look like a pair. When these gloves on account of the expense were, in 1916, finally and officially abolished, an embodiment of age-old etiquette, with a great many other things, was laid in its grave. The fan survived.

The town residence was without a garden, without any of those green, growing things essential to Marie Adelaide. There as at Castle Berg and at Hohenburg the best apartment was reserved for her paternal

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grandmother, and when she was absent it was quite simply closed until her next visit. Marie Adelaide's own apartments were at the back, where a lower-middle-class population pushed its attics, its blackened chimney pots under her very windows, whence she could watch unobserved the pleasant or unpleasant habits and customs of her lowlier subjects. She did not need to play the role of Haroun al Raschid in order to become acquainted with them. Various were the acts of charity occasioned by knowledge thus obtained.

The money of the Grand Duke Adolf had somewhat modernized this palace of the Spanish domination, wedged for the most part in between narrow streets, though the Grand Duke had caused the most encumbering of the old houses to be cleared away. From the front entrance, in what is now known as the Rue du Gouvernement, a superb stairway of the original epoch goes up to the great salons above, where are many portraits of the kings of the Netherlands, of the princes of the House of Nassau. The state dining room is hung with priceless Gobelins depicting scenes from the Odyssey.

On the façade are reminders of important epochs in Luxemburg's varied history. Above the doorway leading into the court are the monograms of Siegfried, that reputed founder of the city; beneath the head of Ermesinde, giver of its liberties, is the inscription, *Libertate Prosperitas*. In bas relief are the casques and devices of Henry VII and John the Blind, *Judicate juste* and the familiar, ravished *Ich dien*. Melusine, too, is pictured in relief, but without a motto, for

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what device can be given to a fairy? Such was the dwelling into and out of which Marie Adelaide passed, with its proud reminders of her ancesored place and power.

The six beautiful Luxemburg sisters, though their dowries were modest, were conspicuous objects of matrimonial overtures from various princely lines. Ministers of State saw in them safe, handsome, healthy consorts for the heirs of the houses they served and the political situation of the neutralized Grand Duchy put them outside national jealousies.

Of marriage for Marie Adelaide herself, wrapped in a thousand veils, there was never any question. She knew that the dynasty must be assured, but there were five sisters, one or the other would give an heir to the throne, in especial — and time was to show how prophetically — she designed her sister Charlotte, eighteen months younger than herself, for this purpose. Various extremely tentative suggestions were made to her by her Ministers but she always turned from them with a proud, shy smile, a fluttering of heavy, white lids over blue eyes, a drawing up and away of her young person that forbade any real discussion.

One who knew Marie Adelaide well said that her sometimes expressed and always underlying physical distaste for marriage, her avoidance in thought and word of all things sexual had come in part from the too-early but necessary reading and signing of various documents relating to criminal cases, the licensing of bordels, to punishment or pardon for heinous offences incumbent on the crown. In that way she became

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aware of transgressions before unknown to her, and though she went through that dark knowledge vicariously something seemed to be irretrievably hurt in the process. The picture of her ministers finding themselves under the unpleasant necessity of mentioning to those entirely innocent ears strange sins is a curious one. However, she did her princely duty by the criminals and prostitutes of her country and in her heart, whatever her hand signed, judged none that she herself be not judged. '*Lilium inter spinas.*'

Taken from sunrise to sunset of a single day out of that world of women of varying kinds and degrees of inferiority, grandmother, mother, sisters, aunts, cousins, ladies-in-waiting, governesses occupied necessarily with the formalities and petty intrigues of a small court, put into one of men and impersonal affairs, her first and only sure support had been her constitutional rights, of which she early set about obtaining a clear conception. Later she was to refuse certain compromises that would have smoothed her path. Though she grew to be at ease with these ministers of her realm, it was always in an impersonal sense, in the discharge of objective duties. In no way could anyone pass beyond that cordon of her womanhood that she drew about herself. In her social relations she was still more impregnable. Men had no access to her life or thought, and only existed clothed in some office, shrouded in some function. Her ministers were in the end to complain of an excess of discretion. Who and what was that girl who had no *confidante*, experienced no need of expressing thought or feeling? Sometimes these were revealed

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by a heightened pink in her cheeks, sometimes by a flash from her eyes, the fluttering of her eyelids; never by a betrayal of the tongue. They had, however, to admit that they found her amenable to reason, with a certain innate sense of justice; though inclined to mercy it was not blindly nor fitfully — *Judicate juste*. Politically she had a tendency to procrastination, found in many women rulers and not without its uses, deliberately pigeon-holing matters about which she was not sure. From the first she listened to praise of her acts or words with caution, and was apt to show a certain scorn, even anger, when it passed to flattery. Always that 'handful of dust.'

In that chaste, ardent breast burned the humble hope that in her person, by her example, she might aid, ever so slightly, in realizing the Kingdom of God upon the soil of Luxemburg. The natural mystical tendencies of her people were propitious to such thoughts and such desires. It may be truly said of her that she remembered her Creator in the days of her youth. Her piety, a golden thread on which her public and private acts were hung, was exceedingly pleasing to the God-fearing Luxemburgers. There were inevitably those among her deputies who scoffed at her youthful fervour, but her people at large rejoiced in her piety, honoured her innocence, were proud of her beauty, her interior virtues being quite naturally set off and enhanced by those many outward graces. Her humility, her shyness covered, all came to learn, an iron will. She was fair but she was strong. Someone likened her to a branch of mimosa that could bear the coldest of nature's winds, but a

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human touch and that feathery, filmy beauty would shrink and stiffen. The situation presented certain difficulties for ministers.

Marie Adelaide rose early, going to church at half-past seven on foot, winter and summer, in all weathers. Afterwards she breakfasted with her mother and sisters somewhat heartily, as is the custom of the country, coffee, toast, cakes, cold meats being served. Sometimes, however, she would go on a strict diet, alleging that she did not want to get fat, but really, all knew, to mortify her natural love of good food. She then gave personal attention to her animals, feeding her rabbits, her birds, running about with her dogs, or watching the slow weaving of a cocoon, the bursting of a butterfly from its chrysalis. After which with the Countess Anna she went through her mail.

At ten o'clock she was ready to receive her ministers and was with them until one o'clock, considering in what sometimes seemed unnecessary detail any question up for discussion and decision. It was a new experience for those men, many of whom had served easy-going, indifferent, or absent overlords.

The official half year of mourning for the Grand Duke William was from February 26th to August 26th; this exempted the young ruler from court functions but not from her governmental duties. It demanded at first an extraordinary effort of will on the part of Marie Adelaide, naturally lazy—even slothful—to keep pace with the ceaseless round of work, to perform the public acts of a sovereign. That theocratic sense of duty which was to inspire so many

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of her decisions; her beauty, her reserve, her habit of speaking no unnecessary word — for she followed out, sometimes disconcertingly, the old Spanish motto that 'silence is worth a hundred pence of speech anywhere' — her patience with the most irksome tasks, in part made up for the total lack of preparation. Wishing to know what her ministers thought she had a way of listening attentively to what they said as she sat in her great chair, her hands wrapped around its arms or lying folded in her lap, her head bent forward to listen rather than to speak.

When she was in residence at Castle Berg she motored into town three or four times a week according to the need for these ministerial audiences, returning with batches of documents, which she would read over carefully in the evening. On the drive home she was mostly silent, endeavouring to think matters out for herself, smoking endless cigarettes as she did so. Ahead of her were living duties, about her lay noble ruins, behind her was the immemorial city — and she born out of her time. Always new things were to war with old in that girl of two races on whom Fate had cast its incalculable eye.

At one o'clock the family assembled for the mid-day meal to which the ladies-in-waiting were bidden. The excellent but simple repast of soup, meat, vegetables and a sweet dish was ceremoniously served according to the traditional custom. There was still an eighteenth-century way of helping oneself to fruit and to the *Löffelbiskuit*, always, however, left untouched on the plate, to be taken by the lackeys to the different rooms for later consumption.

MARIE ADELAIDE

All the sisters were of very healthy constitutions, Marie Adelaide in especial having what is called *eine Rossnatur* (strong as a horse). She could sleep the clock round or go without sleep, eat much or abstain without the slightest trace upon her charming countenance. She had, too, the royal habit of standing and keeping everybody else standing for hours without herself experiencing fatigue, sending ministers, court ladies, diplomats exhausted from her presence. Long afterwards when recalling her to memory many have said that it was in the guise of a tall and lovely plant standing very straight, yet delicately on its stalk.

In the afternoon when in town Marie Adelaide walked with her mother, her lady-in-waiting, with one or all of her sisters, the *Tanten* or *Cousinen* who might be visiting them, through the Bambusch Forest stretching to the Grund (Clausen) at the base of the city. There in the Grund was once another great palace built by Count Ernest Mansfeld. Its splendours are recalled now but by a few crumbling walls and portals. Destined to survive its creator but a short time, the museums of Madrid, Brussels, Trèves and Metz are the depositories of its treasures. In the Grund, too, is the very old Gothic church of Saint Cune-gunde. Its great frescoes record the life of her of the burning ploughshares over which, on her husband's return from the Polish wars, he obliged her to pass, her white feet showing never a blister.

That afternoon walk generally terminated at the Cathedral. Here Marie Adelaide's kneeling form, slender, motionless, came to be a familiar sight in front of that sixteenth-century rood-screen, a masterpiece of



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Flemish Renaissance from the days when Charles V had annoyed the Spaniards with commissions for his Flemings, the Flemings with commissions for his Spaniards.

Marie Adelaide had a natural but somewhat restricted taste for books, often reading aloud to the family group in her low-pitched voice. She loved in particular stories of conversions, persecutions, foundations of religious orders, all those adventures taking place on the shadowy borderland of the soul. The *Autobiography of St. Theresa*, *The Inner Castle*, *Le Livres des Fondations*, were constantly at hand. She devoured those too-rapidly following volumes of Robert Hugh Benson, *The Queen's Tragedy*, *The King's Achievement*, *Come Rack*, *Come Rope*. Jean Henri Fabre's books on the insect world, especially *Souvenirs Entomologiques*, were pencil-marked, corners turned down, as also were many concerning the theories of Mendel. Of him she once said with something secret yet deductive that was often in her look, 'His vocation in no way separated him from the wonders of the natural world.' She had, too, an expert knowledge of the fungi of the Duchy and of Bavaria, possessing a valuable collection of French, German, and English books on the subject.

Her lady-in-waiting tried to teach her to knit and hem-stitch and other *Frauenarbeit*, but she had no natural taste for the needle, and even in the quiet evenings with her family would not unfold her roll of embroidery, except when she was told by one of her sisters to 'look' and would find a bit of background put in or a flower finished.

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Though she did her duty in visiting institutions and schools, in showing herself with one or all of her sisters at public functions, she was often embarrassingly silent on those inspections. Gladly she visited the crèche under her protection. There the most ailing, the most unattractive child received her special attention. She would take a sore-eyed baby in her arms, lift a rickety child to her lap, would remember their names and was always eager to know if this one or that had gained weight since her last visit, if they were really getting colour in their cheeks, if they could walk better. She always brought hampers with her and would distribute slices of white bread and little cakes to the children or hold cups of milk to their lips with her own hands. In such surroundings all her shyness vanished. She would be gay and loving as some young mother playing with her children. 'Poor little souls, I am unhappy that there is a single suffering one in my kingdom!' she often said.

She made yearly visits to the various convents of the Duchy, to the Dominican schools, to the Franciscan missions, to the hospitals of the sisters of St. Vincent de Paul, to the Carmelites, towards whom she had a very special drawing. She would, after some hesitation, enter, as was her royal right, the *clausura*, though of her own choice she would have remained in the parlour where all other visitors were received. On coming away she would be very still, forgetting even her cigarette and sometimes saying: 'They have chosen the better part.'

Spring and summer found her in residence at Castle Berg. In the fishing season she would often

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stand for hours knee-deep in wild flowers on the banks of one or other of the purling streams of her Duchy casting her rod skilfully into dark, willow-fringed pools or into rapid currents, sorry for every silver fish she might catch. She would mostly carefully disentangle it from the hook and return it to its natural element, though on other occasions she was not averse to the business of cleaning what she caught and would hold a still throbbing heart on her palm looking at it curiously, pressing it against her cheek. She was a creature of extremes.

Rose-growing, that flourishing modern industry of Luxemburg, received her special patronage. She was fond of quoting the words of Saint Francis to the brother gardener whom he ordered 'to reserve a special corner for flowering plants or those whose odour is sweet, that their sight and their fragrance might remind the soul of the Eternal beauty.' So those orange and fawn Gloire de Dijon, those Maréchal Vaillant, those Cloth of Gold Noisette, those pale China tea-roses, those yellow Maréchal Niel, those pale pink Provence and Damask beauties which scented her Duchy flourished increasingly.

The stables were well kept up by Baron von Bohlen, Master of the Horse and the six handsome sisters setting out for their morning ride was a gratifying spectacle to the inhabitants, who would run to doors, or put their heads out of windows when they heard a certain sound of hoofs clattering through the city in the direction of the Bambusch Forest, the Grand Duchess ahead distinguishable by her peculiarly easy graceful seat.

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Like her father, she was an excellent shot, and was often in season to be seen driving out to the *Jagd-Revier* for deer-stalking. But what she really enjoyed was walking quietly about in the forest unobserved and undisturbed rather than 'killing something.' The wind in the great beeches and oaks, the fallen leaves, dry on the top, damp underneath, the lingering red and yellow harvest sun gilding garnered fields were unending sources of delight to her. If they got home late they would sit down to supper in hunting costume — green loden suits, little green felt hats with their tiny feathers. Gathered about the table the unusual beauty of each of the sisters was enhanced by that of the others. It was indeed a 'rosebud garden of girls.'

Marie Adelaide's first official reception had been fixed for December 14th, 1912. This seemed a mountainous business. Fate in the shape of death of the Prince-Regent of Bavaria delayed the event till February 12th, 1913. The diplomats were received according to their *ancienneté* in fifteen-minute audiences. They were previously catalogued for the Grand Duchess, and though not dressed in the colours of their countries, they were unmistakably announced, and conversation proceeded if not easily at least inevitably. In the evening there was a large dinner with *Tafelmusik*. The guests were standing in rows, the men in uniform on one side, the women *en grand décolleté* on the other after the time-honoured way, when the Grand Duchess in one of those palely-shining dresses ('moonbeam gowns' they came to be called), over which was stretched the broad yellow

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ribbon of the House of Nassau-Orange, her head glitteringly crowned, entered the great hall followed by her mother and her sisters. She immediately began to *faire le cercle* with the gentlemen, greeting them with her straight-looking, beautiful eyes, flashing her youthful smile, biting her red underlip with her white teeth, her slim body somewhat shrinkingly held, presenting a pleasing but slightly disconcerting picture of youthful shyness and royal pride. *Maquillage* of any sort was unknown to the Luxemburg Court, and the colour that came and went in her cheeks, that dyed her lips, was her own. Her mother, sombrely clad, spoke to the women, though her smile was less ready, and she always preserved a certain coldness of manner.

An English diplomat *à cheval* between Brussels and Luxemburg quoted of the Grand Duchess:

‘Nymph of the downward smile and sidelong glance,
In what diviner moments of the day
Art thou most lovely? . . .’

At such dinners she sat to the right of her mother, the guest of honour on her own right — one of her ministers, a foreign prince, or a diplomat. An interminable, many-coursed repast, after the ancient usage, would be served with priceless wines from those pale vineyards of the Duchy or the Rhinelands. Marie Adelaide was mostly quite silent, thankful when the gentlemen beside her had the gift of speech. She often said afterwards, ‘I am one who makes things hard.’

After dinner she would go again from group to group of the then mingled men and women, still

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speaking shyly, with a smile and always with a way of raising her eyebrows when listening which gave a pleasing impression of concentration on what was being said to her. She spoke English with perfect fluency and an excellent accent, having the habit of using it as well as French in her family together with the more habitual German.

A word must be said of *le cercle*, unavoidable function, dreaded through the ages by most rulers, enjoyed only by a few having special gifts — Edward VII, Kaiser William II, King Alfonso XIII, two Queens of Roumania showing themselves adepts at it. It is carefully prepared with indications concerning those admitted on which to hang a tiny shred of conversation, the names being clearly called out by the master of ceremonies. When someone was skilled enough or bold enough to speak first — or rather seem to speak first, Marie Adelaide was always grateful. 'I shall never be any good at making *le cercle* if I live for a hundred years,' she often said to her lady-in-waiting, who knew the agonies of timidity covered by that smiling, blushing face, especially that biting of the red underlip by those white teeth.

Though time and circumstances somewhat modified her constraint she was never to give, despite her youth and beauty, to the functions of the very modest Luxemburg seasons that imprint and form of the great world — ease with reserve, gaiety in measure, free yet good manners, *esprit*, a dash of delicate coquetry which, in highly placed women, has never hurt any court — besides those numberless subtler ingredients composing really agreeable society.

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When obliged to receive alone in the large drawing room of the town residence or in that of Castle Berg she would listen with that slightly bent head and those sweet, forward-looking eyes, but she was often twisting nervously a handkerchief in her gloved hands, or opening and shutting the traditional fan, desperately awaiting the end of the audience. Many a royal personage unaccustomed to the ordinary amenities of social intercourse has been thrown into a panic when receiving the scion of some little provincial house or the representative of some exotic, distant and negligible nation.

The picture of the lady-in-waiting sitting at a table outside the door of the audience chamber, her hand on a little bell while the princess receives is a familiar one for centuries in North European courts. Within the tableau is often the following: The royal personage and the lady admitted to audience seem to be talking, constrainedly perhaps, but still finding subjects of conversation. At the sound of the bell the princess stands up instantly, be it in the beginning, middle, or end of a sentence. The lady finds her audience suddenly at an end. Bowing, she backs quickly, sometimes breathlessly, out of the room to give place to the next lady awaiting her turn in the ante-chamber with the mistress of ceremonies.

Among the diplomats accredited to Luxemburg at the time of Marie Adelaide's accession were the American Minister Henry van Dyke with residence at The Hague; the Russian Prince Koudacheff, resident in Brussels (brother-in-law of Isvolsky then Minister of Foreign Affairs at St. Petersburg;) Count Giskra

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and his American wife; the British Minister, Sir Alan Johnstone, with his American wife, resident in the beautiful, ghost-haunted Legation at The Hague.

In addition to state dinners there were generally two concerts to which were also bidden officers and their wives. Scions of *la vieille noblesse* came, too, from the lovely, ancient Trèves, the nearest large town, six miles from the frontier, and whose history has been often so closely linked with that of the Duchy. Shut in by vine-clad hills, many of its old red sandstone buildings are inhabited by families whose lineage is enveloped in the mist of ages, city as it once was of Roman Emperors — 'Rome beyond the Alps,' the old Latin Ansonius called it. Later it was the seat of one of the largest Bishoprics of Europe, capital of a powerful spiritual Electorate. Now with its imposing ruins, its imperial traditions, its sunny immemorial vineyards, still the seat of a great Bishopric, it is the most interesting city of the Rhinelands.

Marie Adelaide's Court Marshal during those first years was Baron Ritter von Gruensteyn who administered the grand ducal household with an order and economy so meticulous and sparing that his subordinates called it parsimony. Pedantic, cut and dried, a faithful servant of the crown, he was also a gifted violoncellist, often playing for the grand ducal family in the evening, accompanied by one or other of Marie Adelaide's sisters. She liked very pure music — Bach, Handel, Mozart; the early Italians — Monteverde, Palestrina, Scarlatti. Beethoven seemed to awaken some dark thunder in her heart, and instead of listening motionless with intent eyes, half-opened, smiling lips

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and forward-bending head, her face would sometimes become sombrely veiled and she would get up and leave the room.

Those who knew her best surmised that that deep, hot nature had been in some way deviated from its natural course. Her aloofness when matters of love were in question, resembled the flight of a bird from possible snare, always that instant instinct of escape. She even turned aside from the expressions of love of her sister Elizabeth and the Prince of Thurn and Taxis — madly enamoured of each other. With all this there was that tender, gay affection for children. Whether there were passionate, smouldering depths in that too proud, too silent heart, whether it was the vow of chastity that she had strangely made at the marriage of the Emperor Karl, whether it was the sudden initiation into the sins of a people that forbade all thought, all mention of love, no one can say. She was chary of physical contact of any kind even with her mother or her sisters. A kiss of her mother's hand, a nod to her sisters, an infrequent handshake was her habit, except at pivotal moments of her life.

It was soon seen by her ministers, in especial by Paul Eyschen, that their beautiful young ruler was of a complex, but entirely unformed character. In the spring of 1913 it was decided that she should make, incognita, the traditional *tournée des princes*, to familiarize her with other lands and prepare her for her state visits. As for so many of Northern origin the classic *Italienische Reise* was selected, Goethe having left this habit among his precious legacies to Central Europe.

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Marie Adelaide travelling as the Countess Reinau, departed from her Duchy in the rain-sodden, mist-enveloped month of March accompanied by the Countess Anna, also by Baron Brandis, *grand veneur*, of suitable age, uncompromising personality and watchful eye, together with several servitors. From the first step out of her territory Marie Adelaide showed that morbid, obsessional distaste for publicity that was to give to herself and to others so many uncomfortable hours. She kept to the sole society of her official companions. A natural gesture of her lady-in-waiting to let her pass first through a doorway would cause an angry flush to deepen the youthful pink of her cheeks. She devised a system by which Countess Anna and Baron Brandis were to call her 'Mariechen' in public, she was to call the Baron 'Uncle,' while the ample-figured Countess was to be 'Baby,' *tout court*, a name she afterwards kept. The merest glimpse of the detective discreetly distancing his steps, detailed by the Italian Government to safeguard her comings and goings, would throw her into fits of rage. . . .

But that first plunge into Italy records above all blue eyes tirelessly looking out of train-windows. Wax-like, she lent herself to the emotions of that descent from those stark, blue-white, ice-bound mountains of the St. Gothard Pass, antique road of invasions and pilgrimages, into the soft loveliness of the Italian world. In silence she slipped down those golden, sun-bathed slopes, streaked with their soft, shining, powdery roads, marked out by those dusty plane and poplar trees, accented by a solitary velvety cypress

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(typical of something dark and isolated in her own nature), through those little, pink-walled, green-shuttered, oleander and geranium embowered *paesi*, vaulted by that deep, serenely blue sky, unlike the high, restlessly cloud-flecked heavens of Luxemburg, of Hohenburg. . . . Others of her race had gone down into Italy for conquest or for glory; she for beauty.

Sunset arrival at Venice; stepping into the gondola breathless at the sudden, unimagined loveliness, trailing her hand in the pearly waters. St. Mark's; kneeling in its luminous gloom. Florence where she spent hours in the Pitti and Uffizi Galleries, in the Monastery of San Marco. Rome: St. Peter's visited between trains (it was not her moment for the 'city of the soul'). Sorrento, Amalfi briefly, Naples for a while. She loved especially the Aquarium, and after a wide glance at the volcano, at the incomparable line of that shining bay, she would enter to spend hours gazing into its light-flecked, fluid spaces, comparing those highly-coloured, beflounced and fluted bizarreries of the southern seas — the beautiful Venus girdle, the living coral, those strange medusae, those greedy octopuses, with the soberer trout, grayling, gudgeon, pike and barbel of the rivers of her Duchy. She insisted, too, on visiting the crater of Vesuvius, going nearer than was considered safe, and there is the picture of Baron Brandis holding his too adventurous young sovereign back by her skirts.

At last Paestum, to find the late afternoon sun upon the temples, burnishing with its reddest gold those reminders of a supreme art. She who looked mostly

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for trace of Christian saint and martyr could deliver her soul over to pure beauty. '*La beauté parfaite, la beauté parfaite,*' she kept repeating. Then, too, the luxuriant growth of fern, acanthus and laurel harbouring a world of lizards, salamanders, small snakes, and whirring, singing insects ravished her attention. Finally in a sort of intoxication of beauty, she ran, with her shoes and stockings on, her skirts held up, into the shallow, glittering, deathless sea, washing against those hot, shining, immortal sands.

But this journey was to show her only things, places, not to be productive of personal relationships. All was seen as from afar, an immense unpeopled space continuing to lie between her and the actual world of men and women.

When it was known that among the souvenirs she brought back was a photograph of Fra Angelico's picture of St. Peter Martyr with his finger at his lips, and another of St. Benedict making the same gesture, Paul Eyschen is said to have raised his heavy eyebrows, and plucked at the point of his glossy white beard. It was clearer and clearer that they were all in for new things.

Shortly after her return from Italy the young sovereign made her first official visit, preparations for which occasioned some natural flutter in the halls of Castle Berg. It was to Karlsruhe, where the reigning Grand Duchess, born Princess of Nassau, was an aunt on her father's side and she would thus be comfortably broken into her foreign obligations. The familiar *du* of family ties would be continued. Her sister Charlotte, then only seventeen, was to accompany her. She, too,

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because of the same restricted upbringing was apt to be shy on public occasions but she was of an open, sunny nature and temperamentally of a more easy accessibility than Marie Adelaide. The Luxemburg sisters had a pleasing way of setting off one another.

Marie Adelaide's mother when asked, 'What, *what* shall I do?' answered, 'Smile, my child.' Not alone a mother's pride but a mother's confidence lay in the words. On whom had her lovely child ever vainly flashed that smile?

The visit, shaped in a cast-iron, traditional mould, unbroken to our day where rulers have remained on thrones was briefly thus:

The Grand Duchess with her suite was received at the station by the Grand Duke Friedrich reigning since 1907 with his consort, Hilda, over the beforested Duchy of Baden, bearing upon so many of its hills those ruined castles—reminders of ancient invasions. After affectionate greetings Marie Adelaide, on the Grand Duke's arm, passed over what seemed kilometres of red carpet, stepping deeply blushing, into the great carriage *à la* Daumont, where at the Grand Duchess's right her smiling loveliness was acclaimed by a dense crowd. The Grand Duke in full uniform, his hand constantly at his beplumed helmet sat opposite them. An *Ehrencompagnie* escorted them through the leafy old town to the vast palace. . . . That evening *dîner de cérémonie*, at which with inner misgivings but with apparent composure, almost aplomb, Marie Adelaide in a soft white gown, the orange ribbon across her breast, that high diadem crowning her abundant hair, heightening the shining of her blue eyes, the

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flush on her young cheeks, responded to the Grand Duke's toast, he speaking, she reading from a carefully prepared bit of paper which at first trembled in her hand, but a moment later was quite steady. To this dinner all notabilities of the town having their *entrées à la cour* were bidden. Afterwards *cercle*.

The next day luncheon at the palace of the Grand Duchess Mother, the gifted Louise of Prussia, than whom not even patriarchal Germany had known a more devoted *Landesmutter*. Such was her wide, outreaching sympathy of heart and hand that a French diplomat is recorded as saying of her, not without a point of malice, '*Elle créerait des malheurs pour pouvoir les soulager.*'*

On her return to the grand ducal palace Marie Adelaide gave audiences to what seemed an endless succession of ladies. 'Is Carlsruhe the biggest city in the world, having the largest society known?' she asked afterwards of her gentleman-in-waiting with that rare twinkle in her eyes.

That evening gala opera in the adjacent *Landes-Theatre*, where in a pale chiffon gown that both enveloped and revealed the beauty of her stature, she stood in the royal loge between the Grand Duke and Grand Duchess, bowing to the audience turned towards them from the stage. It was her first experience of publicity and would have seemed not only easy but agreeable to any ruler save one of her inborn timidity and reserve. It was, however (even she had to own), a painless breaking in to further appearances

* Prince von Bülow: *Memoirs*, 1930.

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abroad, and she carried it smilingly through to its pleasant end. . . .

In that flower-scented month of May Marie Adelaide revived the ancient devotion to the miraculous Virgin Mater Afflictorum. It had quite naturally fallen into disuse during the reigns of her Lutheran grandfather and father, and had been left there by the Grand Duchess Marie Anne who, though of great personal piety, had not been one to raise questions during her regency, her influence on her daughter after her accession being mostly to discourage any departure from the established order.

The Host was again carried through the streets from the Cathedral, those coped and chasubled priests under the great panoply, those censer-swinging acolytes presenting the unchanged, unchangeable picture that the long-dead Prince de Chimay had seen. Only now from the beautifully proportioned tower of the Gothic Cathedral, rings out at alternate hours the music of the modern *Feierwon*, the Festal Train.

The Grand Duchess followed immediately after the panoply alone, then her black-robed mother, that bevy of lovely sisters, court officials, pilgrims come not only from the cantons of the Duchy but from Belgium, Holland, Alsace, the Rhinelands. In the evening under the windows of the grand ducal palace thousands of Luxemburgers sang in their patois the national anthem *Oms Hemecht* (Our Native Land). Marie Adelaide in a pale gown was of the peculiar shining beauty of the evening star as she showed herself on the balcony, listening to those cries of thankfulness not alone for temporal favours but for

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spiritual, always to be of greater value in her sight. As she turned back into the great hall she said, her face radiant, 'when it was instituted it was to beg for help; now it is to return thanks.' What had been done that day was well done. Had she not given testimony to her 'compact with the Divine'? Her people on their part were to 'thank God that a kind Providence has given us a ruler who not only renders our devotion easy, but by her amiability, her self-sacrifice, her attention to her duties, her constant concern for us has earned a right to it.'

There is another ancient day of gathering instituted by the blind King John which is held on the twenty-fourth of August during the eight days following the Feast of St. Bartholomew. Then peasants and merchants, many still picturesquely clad, come from all parts of the Duchy to market their wares in the capital.

On the sixteenth of June, two days after her nineteenth birthday, the Grand Duchess made her appearance at the court of Belgium. Stepping lightly from the *Salon wagon* dressed in pale grey, her Grand Cordon across her breast she found the Belgian sovereigns awaiting her in full state. Much red carpet, but she was quickly embraced by the Queen, her hand reassuringly kissed by the King. *Garde d'honneur* which she reviewed, bowing very low to the Belgian flag — that ancient black, yellow and red of Brabant whose colours are so often indistinguishably stained in the blood of her sons.

In the evening the usual *dîner de cérémonie*. She received first the Papal Nunzio, Monsignor Nonmesch.

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Then the diplomats accredited to the courts of Belgium and of Luxemburg, as well as the civil and military households of their Majesties. In the great hall awaited her, too, the Belgian Ministers of State and the members of society. This last was what she called 'the worst,' but with that proud mien, that soft smile, that head bent forward to listen, none suspected it. At the entrance into the banquet hall on the King's arm to the stirring sounds of her own hymn and of the 'Brabançonne,' that tall, slight figure of shining youth, enveloped in palely glistening satin, ear bent to the hymns of peoples was an unforgettable sight. . . . Later she answered the King's toast very composedly, though it was seen that her cheeks burned more deeply, her eyes shone more brightly.

After dinner the inevitable *cercle*, but inspired by the easy and cordial atmosphere about her, Marie Adelaide 'maintained' royally. No one is young, beautiful and a ruler, whatever the heart's timidity, for nothing. Gone was the shyness that had plagued her at Carlsruhe. She afterwards said that the presence before dinner of the young Prince Leopold had put her in *Stimmung*. But for whatever modestly-given reason, she beautifully carried off the honours of the occasion, and it was whispered about that never had so pure an expression, nor so winning a smile been seen on a princely countenance.

But when at last in her apartments her instant exclamation to her lady-in-waiting was 'I'll be ashamed to see any of these kind people again, they *must* think I'm an idiot!'

After the simplicity of Luxemburg the Brussels

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court seemed very luxurious, the palace being lavishly, magnificently kept, down to the smallest detail — great chased silver platters piled with rarest fruits, masses of flowers in priceless porcelain and crystal vases were continually renewed in the apartments of the Grand Duchess and her suite.

The next day, in beautiful weather, she drove with the King through the streets in an open equipage, an acclaiming public lining the route of the fair cousin and neighbour, on her way to the historic Hôtel de Ville — where once an Emperor had laid down his power — to be received by the Burgomaster Max, destined to play so great a role in those hidden war-days.

In the evening traditional gala opera, the house decorated with great festoons of intertwining black, yellow and red — red, white and blue. Entrance again to the stirring sound of the two national hymns. Rustling of the uniformed, tiara-ed audience turning towards the royal loge. . . .

On Sunday morning visit to Laeken. With the King and Queen were their children, Leopold, Charles and Marie-José. Mass was celebrated in the chapel of the famous greenhouses, the altar raised under exotic trees and vines bearing rare, brilliant flowers and fruits — the whole presenting a solemn and beautiful sight, the women kneeling in their light summer gowns, the men standing in uniform. Afterwards the Grand Duchess went through the palace and conservatories hand-in-hand with the seven-year old Marie-José.

Here let us pause to look at the time-softened

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linings of history, often more interesting than the new events that cover them. The recent marriage of Princess Marie-José to the Prince of Piedmont* over the complete suitability of which hangs the light of youth, beauty, hope and piety, makes it of interest to fling back fleetingly this special cloak of history.

In the Ficquelmont† letters to the Countess Thiessenhausen,‡ are found intimately silhouetted at an important moment the figures of the founder of modern Belgium and of his equally gifted son. The date Vienna, May 17th, 1853, gives us from Count de Ficquelmont:

‘. . . King Leopold arrived day before yesterday with his son. He looks much older in spite of a very black wig. The son, tall, well-built, has the Orleans face, in this he made a mistake, that of his father would have been better, for he was very handsome. . . .’

The Countess: ‘I am most curious as to the result of this visit . . . it is a matter of showing, one to the other, our young Archduchess Marie Henriette (daughter of the Palatine Princess) and the young Duke of Brabant . . . She is only sixteen, has beauty and esprit, but has been brought up like a boy. Her mother, exaggerated in everything, hasn’t the faintest

* Marie - José - Charlotte - Sophie - Amelie - Henriette - Gabrielle born at Ostend, 4th August, 1906.

Humbert, Prince of Piedmont (Umberto-Nicolas-Thomas-Jean-Marie) born at Racconigi, 15th September, 1904.

Married, 8th January, 1930, with great splendour in the Pauline Chapel of the Quirinal Palace. Immediately after the ceremony the royal couple, the bride in her wedding gown and glittering crown drove through the Eternal City, sun-flooded, beflagged, to the Vatican to receive the blessing of Pope Pius XI.

† Count de Ficquelmont, Austrian statesman and diplomat.

‡ Lady-in-waiting to three Empresses of Russia and sister of the Countess de Ficquelmont.

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idea of what it means to be a woman of the world. The Duke is eighteen and is said to be charming. . . .'

Friday, May 18th, 1854:

'I was overjoyed at seeing again dear King Leopold, he did us the honour of passing the evening with us alone, accompanied only by his son, the Duke of Brabant, and Sullivan (Belgian Minister to Vienna). I found him looking very well and always with those same affectionate and friendly ways . . . The Duke of Brabant is most attractive, his nose is a little long (that famous nose that was to lend itself during forty years to cartoonists of many countries) but for the rest his physiognomy is agreeable and he looks very intelligent . . . Everybody is pleased with the marriage, our imperial family and King Leopold. The King is rather in love with the Archduchess Elizabeth, very much *en beauté* now, and if he were not so pre-occupied with the future of his son he might perhaps himself think of remarrying.* The reception of the King of the Belgians by our Court was from the beginning of the most amiable. Our Emperor has been perfect (Franz Josef, then in his twenty-third year) . . . It is said that Louis Napoleon is very annoyed at the marriage of the Duke of Brabant with our Archduchess. In Belgium they are overjoyed; this descendant of Marie Thérèse, whose memory is always dear to the Netherlands, will be received with enthusiasm. I count upon the wisdom and *savoir-faire* of good King Leopold to form her. With her sixteen years, her beauty and esprit, there is stuff for the making of a distinguished princess . . .

* Widowed since 1850 of Louise of Bourbon-Orleans.

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Belgian artists who have come to paint portraits of her are in delight at her beauty and her amiability.

‘Teplitz, August 11th, 1853

‘. . . The marriage by proxy of the Duchess of Brabant took place yesterday. We are all laughing when we think of the sight the Archduke Charles must have presented, taking the place of the Duke of Brabant. He is always so embarrassed when speaking to women. We imagine the jokes that the other young Archdukes made at his expense seeing him by the side of that beautiful, fresh young bride. She leaves the fourteenth with her entire Austrian retinue which will give her to the care of the court and of the Belgian family at Verviers, following her, however, as far as Brussels.’

It was to the palace of Laeken built by Marie Christine and Albert of Saxe-Teschen that the Duke of Brabant brought this lovely bride. As Leopold II he was to bring to his kingdom the vast region of the Congo. Those descendants of the house of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, with their magnificent administrative gifts, have been propitious to Belgium.

The Archduchess Henriette bearing no sons, the crown passed, as we all know, to Albert, son of Leopold's brother, the Count of Flanders and his Hohenzollern wife. This prince sought in turn a wife in Germany, the gifted Duchess Elizabeth in Bavaria. These were the rulers who received Marie Adelaide on that bright June sabbath in the new palace of Laeken, built on the site of the old in which both Leopold I and II had drawn their last breath.

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Luncheon at the Luxemburg Legation, the Minister, Amaury Count de Marchant et d'Ansembourg being the possessor of one of the vast ruins of the Duchy as well as of the newer château built largely out of the remains of that destroyed in 1683. Like all the stronghold-bearing heights of Luxemburg, Ansembourg has its legend — that of the 'Lady of the Spinning Wheel.' Ravished from France this princess was made prisoner in the castle. Its lord fell in love with her. She asked but one favour — that the nuptials be delayed till she had spun her wedding garment. She was so long about it that the Count became impatient.

'Is the wedding gown not yet finished?' he asked one night.

Despairing of rescue by her true love she cried 'No, but my shroud is,' and forthwith jumped from the window in sight of the long-delayed rescue party. Since then privileged ears can hear, in the old ruin, the whirr of a spinning wheel. . . .

The King and Queen, Ministers of State and diplomats were again at the station to bid adieu to the lovely young ruler of the rose-embowered, war-scarred Duchy to the East. The Queen presented her with a Brussels lace fan beautifully mounted in gold and ivory which Marie Adelaide opened and waved in final smiling farewell as the train moved slowly out.

When all was over and she found herself alone with her own people it was not simply a sigh of relief, but one of pleasure that she gave. *Es war doch schön*, she said unexpectedly.

In the winter of 1914, that winter holding in the

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secrecies of its dark, cold womb the life and death of millions, Marie Adelaide made her official visit to the Queen of the Netherlands. It was her last to foreign courts.

She started on the eighteenth of January in the usual *Salon wagon*, with a temperature of twenty degrees below zero. With her were the Baroness Syberg, the Countess Anna and Ritter von Stolberg. They spent the chilly hours playing bridge, the Grand Duchess remarking with one of her sidelong looks as she lost a rubber, 'If Wilhelmina had been Wilhelm she would have been me.'

She stepped out of the train on to the red velvet carpet looking more than ever like a fairy princess, some *Schneekönigin* out of a story-book, in her soft, white ermine coat, dark fur-trimmed hat, carrying a great muff. She was received by Queen Wilhelmina, immensely stout, overflowing her sables, all set off by the most amiable of smiles and the most conservative of hats. Both, through their fathers, were heiresses of the House of Nassau. They took their places in the victoria, after saluting the Dutch and Luxemburg colours, red, white and blue, one running vertically, the other horizontally, and were driven rapidly over the crackling snow under one of those low-hanging, palely-bright skies of northern winters, through the brick-coloured, spacious town to the palace which gave full testimony to the far-famed Dutch cleanliness. 'Not only the parquets but the rugs on them shine,' they observed on being shown into their apartments. In each sitting-room, after a time-honoured way, were placed little brazier-like stoves with singing kettles of

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hot water, flanked by low tables on which were beautiful old silver tea services and porcelain of priceless Saxe.

In the Palace were, pleasantly reminiscential, portraits of the rulers of the House of Orange — many of whom hung also in Castle Berg, in the Luxemburg town residence and in Hohenburg — those uniformed ancestors wearing their familiar orders — the Black Eagle, the Elephant, the Order of St. Hubert, of the Seraphims, etc. etc. 'There's great grandfather William; there's great-uncle Wilhelm Friedrich; there's great-aunt Louise,' Marie Adelaide kept exclaiming and ended by feeling entirely at home under those very wide-spreading branches of her family tree.

The history of the House of Luxemburg and that of Nassau had become linked in the fourteenth century when Otto of Nassau took to wife Adelaide, sole remaining heiress of Vianden, that great castle afterwards destroyed by the Duke de Boufflers. From this union came many well-known figures of history — William the Silent, great-grandfather not only of the first King of Prussia, but of William III of England, (whose title was Wilhelm Heinrich of Nassau-Vianden, Prince of Orange.) Wilhelmina and Marie Adelaide were linked through him as also through Prince William Frederick of Orange. Their device, 'I will maintain' were the same. Their national hymns are different. The ancient Dutch anthem begins: '*Wilhelmus van Nassouwe ben ick van dietschen bloet*' (William of Nassau, I am of German blood). The Luxemburg Anthem *Oms Hemecht* (Our native Land), is of later origin.

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The destinies of these two women were to be more diverse than their blood. One, youthful sentinel on a great highway—mistress of an Arcadian Duchy, whose rocks and soil conceal an incredible wealth of ore while they reveal that, more lovely, of forest, vineyard, field and river—was early at grips with an implacable fate.

The other called, too, for lordship at eighteen and, too, 'by the Grace of God,' has known a long and solid reign over a lowland people whose will protects them to the East and South, to the North and West the sea. She may be accounted 'happy' as life goes. But who escapes the mortal lot? Certainly not rulers, for to their natural and private griefs are added those more complex of their peoples. . . .

Dîner de cérémonie that evening. Toasts, *cercle*. That slim young figure glimmeringly clad in a soft rose velvet was likened to some lovely winter flower.

The next day a many-coursed luncheon in the full Dutch tradition followed by a drive in motors to Leyden to witness a skating competition on the ice-bound waters of the old Rhine, resembling scenes dear to Dutch painters. 'Just like *Les Plaisirs d'Hiver, d'après Van der Velde* in the Gallery,' the Grand Duchess said as she shiveringly clasped her muff tightly to her.

Afterwards she went alone to take tea with the Queen-Mother, Emma of Waldeck-Pyrmont, to whom she was related on her father's side and whose great favourite she had long been.

In the evening gala opera. Like so many of such representations the heart was to be torn out of three

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operas to form the evening's entertainment. After the playing of the national hymns the Queen sat back and left her smiling guest to stand alone for a moment in the colour-draped loge. She was an unforgettable sight. '*Pareille à un très haut et très pâle volubilis*,' said the French Minister; 'the admiration of everyone but herself,' said one of her suite.

The next day presentation to various ladies of the court of a monogrammed order on a blue and yellow ribbon that her paternal grandmother had founded. In return Dutch decorations were presented to her suite.

After her child-loving way the Grand Duchess sought every opportunity to be with the Princess Juliana, not yet six years old, getting down on her knees to play with her, running races with her down the long corridors, dressing and undressing her dolls.

Protocolary adieux, smiles, and the visit of reigning Nassau to reigning Nassau was over.

On her return to Luxemburg she found herself plunged again into a mass of governmental duties to which she attended with all her old meticulous patience but with an increasing ease.

Paul Eyschen's remark to one of his colleagues is said to have been '*que son Altesse Royale continue de voyager*.'

Fortune still smiled upon her royal youth; unspoken, holy aspirations lay dewily asleep in her heart, illusion still enfolded what seemed a darling of destiny.

Gone indeed were the prosaic days of Adolf I and William IV, of the mostly absent King Grand Dukes.

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She moved for a while in their midst like a princess out of some fairy tale, or out of a legend of one of her own castles. Her subjects had ample reason to thank the God of their fathers who had not always done so well by them. The Netherlands and Luxemburg were again prospering with women at the head of government.

On April 27th, 1914, the King and Queen of the Belgians returned the visit of the Grand Duchess. The ancient, yellow-draped town was delicately ashine in the early spring sun, and the far vistas of the 'Arcadian Duchy' were insubstantially transfigured under the iridescent blue of the afternoon heavens.

Major Van Dyck went to Kleinbettingen, the frontier town, to meet their Majesties and conduct them into 'the fairy kingdom.' At the station the Grand Duchess was waiting with Count and Countess de Villers and Chamberlain de Colnet d'Huart. After reviewing the *Ehrenkompagnie* in that gilding light of late afternoon the King took his place by the side of the Grand Duchess in the great carriage *à la Daumont*. By them rode, beautifully mounted, the Master of the Horse von Bohlen and Flügel Adjutant Speller. In the second carriage was Queen Elizabeth to the right of the Grand Duchess mother. At the old palace were awaiting them the five young princesses and the official household.

That evening at half-past seven their Majesties received in the great *Königszimmer* those diplomats having residence in Luxemburg. During the dinner that followed the Grand Duchess was at her loveliest,

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with King Albert easy, gracious, kind, on her right. Afterwards a tour was made of the brilliantly illuminated town, from which they returned to watch from the balcony of the palace the torchlight procession throwing strange, evocative lights on the dark masses of the ancient Bock. *Luxembourg par son nom est Ville de Lumière.**

As this visit is typical of hundreds of royal visits to European capitals we will continue its schedule.

At noon the next day their Majesties received the Belgian colony, naturally numerous, the men being presented to the king in the *Festsaal*, a large hall decorated in light, modern colours with great mirrors and heavily frescoed ceiling. Their wives were presented to the queen in the *Königszimmer* where hang the portraits of the three King Grand Dukes, William I, II, and III, and one of the Grand Duke Adolf, representing in their persons the dynastic history of Luxemburg since the Treaty of Vienna. Between these two great rooms is a smaller salon furnished with pink silk upholsteries and tapestries, where hangs a lovely pastel of Marie Adelaide and three of her sisters—Charlotte, Hilda and Antonia—by the Munich artist, Tini Rupprecht.

At one o'clock state luncheon at the Belgian

* Verses written in honour of Louis XIV, contemporaneously with the taking of the citadel.

*'Luxembourg, par son nom, est ville de lumière,
Mais ce nom ne lui donne un éclat sans pareille
Que lorsque, pour briller de sa clarté première
Vaincue, elle se rend à Louis, son soleil,' etc.*

*'Luxemburg's name means City of Light,
But this name is due to it alone
When, yielding to the Sun King's might,
It blazed with light before unknown,' etc.*

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Legation, Count Jehay van der Steen being Minister. Greetings, *cercle* — curtsies, blushes, smiles.

There was an excursion planned to the Müllerthal with tea at Castle Grünhof belonging to Count de Villers, but the king and queen though so amiable were mortal and took instead a quiet drive with the Grand Duchess Mother. In the evening a 'family' dinner with her before attending a concert in the Stadthaus, entering to the sound of the 'Brabançonne.'

It will have been noticed that due attention is always paid to the mother of the sovereign. What has been and is, will be, and the consideration given those who by acts of God are no longer in positions of power is one of the pleasing and indestructible traditions of royalty. The dearest king is less dead than a departed republican chief whose passing, whether by political vicissitude or death, is the most complete of all obliterations.

The next day at eleven o'clock, still under the loveliest of skies (though hiding that darkest of all clouds), after a last enthusiastic demonstration at the station their Belgian Majesties took their friendly departure from the Duchy whose history had so often been one with their own.

Two years of fairly quiet government passed, on which we will not dwell as they relate to the somewhat prosaic, routine, interior affairs of Luxemburg, with the usual clashes in the Chamber, the usual passing of measures, the usual filling of places made vacant by death or political vicissitude. If emphasis has been

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placed on the somewhat stereotyped visits of the Grand Duchess to foreign courts it is because she who made or received them, clad glitteringly in youth, beauty and consideration, was so soon to be garbed scantily in public disfavour and in the dark stuff of exile.

Two weeks before the assassinations at Sarajevo she entered her twentieth year.

The Luxemburgers were content with things in general and in particular. Paul Eyschen bearing with an amiable and touching nobility the weight of the years, more gifted than the less time-laden men associated with him, continued to be Prime Minister, though no longer virtual head of the State, for now 'Luxemburg was ruled by an angel rather than a prince,' which saying of an emperor flattered the susceptibilities of the Conservatives and calmed even the virulences of the Socialists. All seemed for the best in the best of Luxemburg worlds. Marie Adelaide was apparently in every way fitted by nature for her task and place. Time would ripen her. Lovely and God-fearing, she seemed called to a long and serviceable reign over a pious, freedom-loving people engaged in the arts and crafts of peace.

The Great War was to change all in the twinkling of an eye; in the turn of a hand to make of the Grand Duchy a highway for armies, a vast hospital; to involve the person of its sovereign in hatreds to which her soul was naturally a stranger. Yet it was she who must 'maintain.'

It is the misfortune of rulers that they scarcely ever in the end do the good they have had a mind to do.

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Time and chance happen to them as well as to those they govern, and that the battle is not to the strong, nor the race to the swift, is even more fully exemplified in their destinies than in those of the peoples over whom they are placed.

CHAPTER VII

DIES IRÆ

*'And last of all after the sons the mother
also was consumed'*

THE fatal days of late July, 1914, were upon Europe, secreting the anguished destinies of millions. Though these agonies and these deaths are the last things that the world thirteen years after wishes to hear about, indeed the Peloponnesian wars or those of Hannibal seem more real, certainly more interesting, it is necessary in order to clarify the story of Marie Adelaide to touch passingly on them in their relation to Luxemburg. Time has shown that the most senseless of all wars produced neither conqueror nor conquered. Yet to it the Czar was to 'pledge his last rouble and his last moujik;'^{*} the Kaiser was to intone '*eine feste Burg ist unser Gott*,' while the life-blood ran out of his soldiers and his civilians whitened with starvation; other great nations were to see, lost in swamps lighted by the ignis fatuus of one or another slogan the precious flower of their manhood. And of the thousands of books written coincidently with these agonies few have withstood the test of time, the fall of the fever in which they were conceived. They have little or no historical value except as revealing the contemporary *état d'âme* of peoples.

^{*} Maurice Paléologue: *Mémoires d'un Ambassadeur*.

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Marie Adelaide was at Mass with the other members of the grand ducal family at the parish church of Colmar-Berg when on that Sunday morning of August 2nd word came of the approach of the German armies. The news found her on her knees. She arose, with a last desperate supplication in her heart, on her lips to the God of peace, and hastily went by motor to the palace in Luxemburg, to take council with her ministers.

This gave rise to the legend of her standing on the viaduct with her arms outstretched forbidding the German troops to pass, of which we will speak again.

The authentic account of the second of August and the preceding and succeeding days has now been pretty well sifted from the conflicting statements.

Paul Eyschen had hastily left his 'cure' at Evian on the night of July 29th when he began, old war-horse that he was, to scent the battle from afar.

A formal protest was shortly made against the violation of the neutrality of the Duchy and in this wise. 'On August 3rd, the Chamber was convened in extra session. Paul Eyschen begs its members to be mindful that the *veritables pouvoirs souverains* are lodged with them and enjoins calm. He proceeds to give a résumé of the government's acts during the fateful days.

'On Friday, July 31st, we were all occupied with the question of provisions (*vivres*) in Luxemburg. You know that the countries surrounding us have closed their frontiers against any importations into the Duchy. To avoid being deprived of food we were obliged to take certain measures. We turned to the right

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begging that an exception be made in favour of Luxemburg but without success. Belgium replied that she could do nothing for us, though the port of Antwerp is the one that supplies us. To Germany we made a like demand and there in the last few days obtained a slight concession. . . . Purchases can, also, I believe, be made in the ports of Holland.

‘I made an appeal to the German authorities in favour of those Luxemburgers who have crops still unharvested on the German banks of the Moselle and the Sure. The reply was that these could not be taken from Germany but the President of Trèves telegraphed that the Food Administration would buy all crops belonging to Luxemburg at their market value. . . .’ *

The narrative is long. When M. Eyschen heard that the bridges on the Moselle and the Sure were barred he decided to demand a declaration from both Germany and France that the neutrality of the Duchy be respected. The French and German Ministers to Luxemburg, M. Mollard and Herr von Buch, had been asked for an assurance such as had been given in 1870, but neither of these gentlemen had answered . . . He continues:

‘Prussian officers and soldiers to-day occupied the station of Ulflingen (Trois Vierges) and have torn up rails on our territory. They belong apparently to the 69th Trèves regiment. I can only infer that this is a mistake and await apologies. I must be, however, so much the more urgent in repeating my request to the Foreign Office, already made to the German

* Ruth Putnam's *Luxemburg and Her Neighbors*.

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Minister here, that the Imperial Government should declare as in 1870 that they will respect the neutrality of Luxemburg, so long as this is not broken by any other power.'

M. Eyschen goes on to say how on the arrival of the first train of German troops he presented a protest for which he demanded a receipt. Another protest was also sent to Berlin, definitely asking for an explanation, M. Eyschen assuming that an offensive act against Luxemburg could not have been decreed by Germany, when they were in full peace and when no act had passed in Luxemburg which warranted the proceedings. The Grand Duchess added her personal appeals to the official telegrams of M. Eyschen, appeals for the protection of the land and explicit denials of any of the alleged overt acts, while all the interested Powers were duly notified.

The German Chancellor's telegram to the German Minister for repetition to M. Eyschen was as follows: 'Our military measures in Luxemburg indicate no hostile action towards Luxemburg but simple measures of protection for the railroads under our management to prevent an attack by the French.'

A dispatch from von Jagow to Eyschen was more explicit. In it the Imperial Government offered to make full compensation for any injury inflicted on Luxemburg.

Paul Eyschen's main thought was for the independence of the Duchy. The tight rope of neutrality had gone slack. On one side of him were devils, on the other various deep seas. Extreme caution was indicated.

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The text of the telegram addressed by him to M. Davignon, Belgian Foreign Minister is as follows: 'I have the honour of making Your Excellency acquainted with the following facts. Early in the morning of Sunday, August 2nd, the German troops according to information which the grand ducal government has just received entered the territory of Luxemburg by the Wasserbillig and Remich bridges, and proceeded towards the south of the country and the city of Luxemburg, the capital of the Grand Duchy. A certain number of armoured trains, carrying troops and munitions of war, have been sent by the railway line from Wasserbillig to Luxemburg, where we expect to see them arrive at any moment. These facts imply actions contrary to the neutrality of the Grand Duchy guaranteed by the Treaty of London of 1867. The Luxemburg Government has not neglected to lodge an emphatic protest against this invasion with the Luxemburg representative of His Majesty the German Emperor. The same protest will be telegraphed to Herr von Jagow, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs at Berlin.'

The account of the Belgian Minister to Luxemburg, Count Jehay van der Steen, is the following: 'On the morning of August 2nd, military motors were seen in Clausen (Grund or lower town), north-east of the city proper. Suspecting that troops known to be on the march would speedily arrive at the city gate, Eyschen ordered Major Van Dyck to station himself on the bridge of the Bock, the terminus of the road from Trèves, and to make a formal protest to the first German officer who should present himself. The major

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proceeded there placing his motor squarely across the road so that no one could pass. He perceived an automobile approach from the direction of Trèves, then quickly turn and retreat. Three hours later a train with drawn curtains brought a contingent of troops to the capital. The officer in command of these was requested to appear before M. Eyschen and state under whose orders he was acting.

'Major Van Dyck was awaiting you at the bridge of the Bock. Why did not the automobile advancing on that road continue on its way?' asked the Minister of State.

'It was fired on,' replied the officer.

'I deny that assertion absolutely,' answered Major Van Dyck. 'I was alone with one of my men and we were not armed.' Thus the Luxemburg Commandant and the Belgian Minister to Luxemburg, which tallies with events as subsequently sifted and labelled with their true labels.

Major Van Dyck was the bearer of the highest military title in the Duchy, in command of Luxemburg's 'army,' some 300 men, employed mostly in the postal service, the railways and foundries or growing wheat, wine and roses. Though he went in his motor to the viaduct to find out what was happening he was in no position to demand an accounting of what he saw. The great grey flood finally swept over the bridge. This is the all too prosaic rendering of the legend of the Grand Duchess standing midway on it with outstretched arms. It is the legend that will survive.

Luxemburg has been called a '*demi-vierge* of sorts.'*

* Emil Ludwig, '1914.'

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In a way this is true, for though the armies of Europe have passed over her fair body, though she has been seemingly defiled, there is yet left in her something never violated. Her secrecies are those unreachable, inalienable, of race, geography, climate and above all of a mystical sense purifying, ever operative, that render her ultimately indefectible. She remains what she was, what she is, no matter how treaties throw her now into the arms of one master, now into those of another, nor how armies trample her down.

CHAPTER VIII

CROWNED CHARITAS

'For neither wilt thou do anything well which pertains to man without at the same time having a reference to things divine; and the contrary'

ONCE again Luxemburg, though materially untouched, lying as it did behind the German lines, was to echo with the groans of the shattered and dying sons of its neighbours, mingling with the reverberations to east and west of the artillery that slew and mutilated them. Already in that fatal first week of August wounded men lay within its borders. Marie Adelaide's appearance was as that of an angel of mercy. The shyness that hampered her social acts was gone. That world of wounded men became her natural world. From whatever side they had been brought they found themselves lying together as brothers, embraced in the compassion of the youngest and most helpless ruler of Europe. It was said that wherever ascended a 'Miserere' of suffering there sounded in answer a 'Magnificat' of love and use. Marie Adelaide was indeed the 'handmaid of the Lord.' Something virile yet selfless in her nature responded to the needs about her. With an eager and touching willingness she received and carried out orders from doctors and nurses.

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By August 6th the Red Cross Society was in full working order.

'A solemn hour is come,' she made proclamation to her people, 'perhaps only the prelude to more dreadful happenings against which we are powerless. . . . We have the sublime duty of trying to ameliorate by Samaritan work and words of consolation the sufferings of those lying within our borders. . . . I call now upon the spirit of self-sacrifice of each Luxemburger; in especial upon our various charitable organizations.'

She assumed the protectorate of the Luxemburg Red Cross and began her visits to both fronts, continued during the whole war, where terrible and unforgettable sights presented themselves to her young eyes, which had entirely lost the quiet shining of the days of peace. They were dark with sorrow, they stared in horror, their limpidity was clouded by the rising of winds sure to affect the destiny of the Duchy.

From September of 1914 the Red Cross flag floated above the Hof Marschal's office. French and German alike found bed and care in this building whence orders for the simple ceremonies of the little court had for generations been issued. The Grand Duchess together with her mother and sisters made beds, carried platters of food, scrubbed floors. Marie Adelaide looking even younger than her twenty years in her long white nurse's garb, ready for any task, from putting the screen about the bed of a soldier whose eyes she had just closed to the washing of dishes, has been described as a picture incarnate of *Charitas*. Many likened her to that embodiment of

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‘crowned charity,’ the Saint-Queen Elizabeth. It will be said that in all this she did but as hundreds of thousands of women during the war. Still she did it, and added to these duties were the ever-increasing difficulties of government, among them the essential matter of supplies, gnawing, but not hidden, at the vitals of her people. Then, too, there arose the most perplexing and delicate questions involving the political as well as the economic welfare of the Duchy. Her audiences were often given in her long white smock, in her nurse’s veil — upon her arm the blood-red cross. It was remarked of her, even by her political enemies of which she already had a plentiful crop, that she maintained her accustomed composure and deliberation when attending to her state duties. She was sovereign as well as good Samaritan. But she was not ripe for the horrors of battle and had no natural taste for the shedding of blood, evinced by many female rulers — not in any sense the ‘fire-eyed maid of smoky war.’

CHAPTER IX

THORN BUSHES

'Wheresoever a man dwelleth there will be found a thorn bush by his door'

It had from the first been evident that Marie Adelaide intended to use the authority given her by the laws of her nation. Having found out exactly what both rights and privileges were, she proceeded to clear the ground of a lot of governmental underbrush that had grown up during more than half a century, rooted deeply in the absences of those King Grand Dukes, in her grandfather's advanced age, in her father's long-continued illness, in her mother's perfunctory regency.

During that protracted period the country had been governed solely by ministers and deputies. Suddenly all was changed. That smiling, slim, shy, young ruler insisted on her rights, on fulfilling her constitutional duties. She was not a woman to sign a document unread.

The Luxemburgers, though deeply Catholic and royalist, are also democratically inclined, and *frondeurs* from the cradle up. They are in many ways like the Alsatians who, in spite of being tossed now to one master now to another, have preserved their freedom-loving spirit, their highly individual characteristics, their religious fervours.

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To the frequent obstructive policies on the part of the socialist and radical elements Marie Adelaide's reaction was the same. She was fully in her rights according to the Constitution when she refused her approval, withheld her signature. More and more she was actuated by that theocratic sense of duty and intended as far as in her lay—and it lay very far—to keep pious and God-fearing men in positions of responsibility. It has not been recorded that this brought to her ministers an access of personal holiness. It did mean that they would have to reckon with her in questions relating to religious instruction in the schools, to those affecting monasteries and convents, to institutions for the aged and infirm, orphanages and hospitals served by religious orders.

Marie Adelaide's piety attained a certain completeness very soon after her accession, definitely determining her public acts. She was ruler by the grace of God; also 'a handful of dust,' whatever its glitter.

That slim, princely figure kneeling at the Communion rail, pressed close to the most miserable of her people, or standing with folded hands awaiting her turn in the confessional, was infinitely pleasing to the Luxemburgers. 'We are all God's children but these especially are mine,' she would answer to warnings that she exposed herself to danger or malady in thus mingling unsafeguarded with the poor, the afflicted, the unknown. This fearless humility was, however, her greatest protection. Often too, in the vast, dim Cathedral, she might be seen following the Way of the Cross, falling on her knees at each station. 'I, above all, must not forget the sufferings of Christ,'

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she would answer to any remonstrance. If she met, in the street, a priest carrying the *Viaticum* she would kneel on the pavement till he had passed.

She had a pleasing way of saying with her sweetest smile to any one thanking her for some act of kindness, 'Remember me and my many needs in your prayers,' or else with an intimate, interior look, simply, 'Pray for me.'

It has been truly said that few moderns possess a sense of sin. It was Marie Adelaide's increasing consciousness of it in the world, in herself, in the sure medieval sense, which made that supplicatory life of prayer take on such proportions that the whole was afterwards seen as out of balance in the existence of a very young and very pretty woman who was also a ruler. But she was not an *enfant du siècle* in any sense, rather one of all time, occupied with a seemingly *démodé* matter — the saving of her immortal soul. All who are so occupied pursue it according to the true fashion of their being, inalienably their own.

In spite of her trusting young piety which still had in those days a note of gaiety about it ('Why be sad because one loves God?' she would cry), the crown began, after the way of crowns, to press heavily upon her head. The quiet days of her grandfather, her father, were past. New elements, if not better, were in ferment in the Duchy.

The recently elected Burgomasters of the important towns of Hollericher and Differdingen were well-known free-thinkers and radicals. But it was upon the nomination of the deputy Brincour as Counsellor of State that the young ruler had one of her earliest

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difficulties. He, too, was an avowed anti-clerical and radical. On the other hand Marie Adelaide owed him a certain debt of gratitude as he had been among the most vigorous in upholding her claims to the throne against those of Count Merenberg, who in the male line presented a claim to the Grand Duchy sufficient to gather together a few adherents. He was nephew of the Grand Duke Adolf by his brother's, Prince Nicolas of Nassau's, morganatic marriage with a morganatic daughter of the Czar Alexander II. After some litigation the grand ducal house bought him off by settling on him an income of 40,000 marks. It was whispered that Marie Adelaide in opposing Brincour showed a streak of ingratitude.

It was, however, in the matter of religious instruction in the schools that she encountered her first serious interior difficulties. She considered, as did Philip II of Spain, once overlord of her country, that 'religion is to the State what blood is to the body.' She intended to secure its free circulation, and was to cry out to recalcitrant or free-thinking ministers:

'I am not here by my own power, nor by yours, but by God's, which you, gentlemen, prefer to call Chance.'

It was concerning the famous school laws that the fatal break with Paul Eyschen occurred. He considered her resistance to certain appointments as highly inexpedient. But behind that youthful smile lay a persistent and rather out-of-date sense of what she considered her heaven-appointed task, her 'compact with the Divine.' She intended to maintain religion in the secular education of a people whose

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mystical sense is their natural, and certainly had been their most useful, possession. 'Their faith must not be less, but greater when I die,' she would answer to remonstrance, and once: 'I will not allow their most precious heritage to be stolen whilst I have the key.' And again: 'You know the history of my people. Their prayers have often been their sole bread. Shall I offer them the stone of unbelief?'

For the new school regulations her sanction was necessary. To accomplish a perfectly definite purpose she made use, like many a feminine ruler, of procrastination, thus for months evading the matter of her signature, the papers safely pigeon-holed in her desk — the old enactments necessarily remaining in order. She cut no Gordian knot till the scissors were placed in her hand, but the words '*la vie est un combat*' were sometimes on her red young lips. In full conflict with Paul Eyschen on these new school laws, it was openly wondered who was to be the victor. There could be, when one came down to it, no doubt. Though Eyschen asked for a vote of confidence from the Chamber, he desperately knew himself at the parting of the ways. Marie Adelaide would in the end be inexorable in the matter of religious instruction. She would smile but there would be *intransigence* behind that smile. She would, he knew, have gone to the stake for the principle involved, and was further in her full constitutional rights in keeping the old laws in force. On the other hand the policies of the Duchy were part and parcel of Paul Eyschen's being, in fact his whole existence. It had come to be a question of his resignation or Marie Adelaide's giving way.

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The one was unthinkable — the other impossible. The impasse was solved, not to Marie Adelaide's personal advantage, by his dying of a heart attack on the eve of handing in his resignation, already prepared and signed.

This was in the night of October 11-12th, 1915. He had time to recommend his soul to the Heavenly Powers, to be shriven and anointed — immemorial, recurrent act. . . . Socrates raising the fateful cup in his hands would have spilled a little of the hemlock as a libation to the gods. When told that it had been nicely measured to his strength, he turned to Phaedon begging him to offer a cock at dawn to Esculapius. . . .

Very early in the morning the news of Paul Eyschen's passing was brought to the sovereign of the House he had so long served. She arose immediately and went, accompanied by her mother, to the dwelling where her Minister of State lay dead. He was said by one of his colleagues to have resembled not only the usual presentment of God the Father, but of God the Father the day *after* the Day of Judgment, so final was the expression of repose upon his face.

His young ruler knelt long by that now unprotesting form, her head buried in her hands. When she arose, a look as of one who has come from a far journey in her eyes, she said simply: 'How much wisdom and goodness will be buried in his grave.' Then she turned away making a last sign of the cross, lids falling, lips and hands tightly pressed together in visible effort for control, rigidity of form and movement betraying some profound inner trouble. . . . He was buried from the ancient Cathedral with the dignity due his

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gifts and his long service to Luxemburg, his black-enveloped sovereign the chief mourner. She caused one hundred Masses to be offered up for the repose of his soul.

Europe was in full blood-frenzy. The calm Luxemburgers, though, as in 1870, spared the horrors of war, were not immune from the fevers about them. Their judgments were no longer sane. It began to be whispered about that the reversal by Marie Adelaide of Eyschen's decision concerning the schools, with its attendant bitternesses, had been responsible for his death — first serious interior reproach to be charged to her account. Had he not been the decade-long friend of the House of Nassau, its faithful and tried adviser under four rulers? Had he not helped smooth the way to the throne for the young Grand Duchess herself? Was she not proving herself the thankless ruler of story in whom it were well not to put one's trust? A complication in the case was that the Grand Duchess Anna though so *dévoté* had, during her regency, signed the preliminary bill as drawn up by Eyschen, brought to her by him in person, without even a glance at it, save the dotted line which awaited her name. This reversal of her mother's signature had created a further difficulty for Marie Adelaide with her Prime Minister. But like the first quarrel of lovers (whatever the subsequent pacifications), the situation is never really the same. The rift widens easily. It had been assumed even by her sophisticated Minister that so young, lovely and shy a ruler would not in the end impose personal policies nor show an inflexible line of public conduct.

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The dust of criticism, so slight at first, gathered visibly in various corners of the Duchy. Paul Eyschen's death was the first stone to mark her own political grave. His *grande et chaste Diane Ardennaise* had taken from her quiver an arrow that was not to miss its mark as it twanged from her bow. But if it killed him it wounded her — and in her sceptral hand. . . .

The Luxemburgers presented strange contradictions. In spite of their lusty faith, in spite of the recent, popular placing of the town under the patronage of the Blessed Virgin, a large Communist element raised the cry of their young sovereign being under priestly domination, assailing her as the arch-enemy of the liberties of the people. Her piety was considered excessive, out of date, her assumption of responsibility, her whole *Weltanschauung* became onerous even to her ministers. More and more she demanded, sustained by her constitutional rights, to be informed concerning the affairs of her Duchy. 'I will maintain' was more than ever her device. Her every virtue as her every weakness was, however, to avail nothing. When peoples desire a scapegoat they are wont to take the highest in the land, load it heavily with their misfortunes and drive it out among strangers. She was not to be exempt from this age-old fate of princes.

The disgruntled elements of the Duchy, the Socialists, the 'Franzozlinge' the 'Belgo-maniacs' counted on her strangely increasing unpopularity to forward their plans. After the elections of 1916 the cries against her grew even louder. The leaders of the free-thinking *Bloc* shouted 'Down with Marie Adelaide!' In the heat of the war-fever there was even heard in the

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streets of Luxemburg the cry, 'Long live the King and *Grand Duke* Albert' — the last thing that any Luxemburger of any political shade wanted when in his senses.

Thus Marie Adelaide was finding thorn bushes to the right and left of her every exit. After the portentous winter of 1915-16 the scratches were only too evident.

It was not easy to fill the place left vacant by Paul Eyschen after nearly a half-century of service. There was the short-lived Loutsch Ministry which was dissolved by what her enemies called a *coup d'état* on the part of the sovereign. After several fruitless attempts to form a coalition Ministry there emerged the Thorn Ministry. Of the Left, anti-clerical, but a staunch supporter of the dynasty, Thorn was advanced in age when he became Prime Minister. His kind and honest blue eyes had looked out tolerantly on many a strange event. The question of supplies, his intimacy with Tesmer, commander of the German troops in Luxemburg, are supposed to have caused his fall. He was succeeded by Kauffman who had been Director of Finance. A new coalition cabinet came into being at his call in the summer of 1917. Kauffman, small of stature with a strain of southern blood, resembled, it is said, a little brown *caniche*, his very brilliant, dark, alert eyes revealing his natural acumen. He was of the people, brother-in-law of a peasant who could be seen ploughing his land to the very gates of the park of Colmar Berg. He possessed the confidence and affection of his young sovereign. Luxemburg, dynastic, yet democratic after the

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manner of England, offers full scope for the talents of her sons. . . .

Towards the end of October, 1916, Marie Adelaide left her Duchy for the first time since the outbreak of the war. It was to go to Königstein, near Frankfort, the estate that years before the Grand Duke Adolf had given to his consort, Adelheid Marie of the House of Anhalt. There she stood by the bedside of that mortally-stricken, beloved figure of her childhood, of her adolescence, of her reign. Again on November 20th, she went to bury her. Those two visits to fulfil a last filial duty were construed by her enemies both at home and abroad as of dark and evil political import. The potent catchword 'pro-German' was plastered over her young form. This was readily construable into treachery to and lack of love for her country. As Marie Antoinette was called '*l'Autrichienne*,' the Empress Frederick '*die Engländerin*,' so was Marie Adelaide called '*l'Allemande*.' The loudly spoken wish of certain elements in the Duchy was to push her and the whole grand ducal family 'over the Moselle' as it was euphemistically called. Marie Adelaide increasingly *suspecte*, finally became entirely *persona non grata* with the Entente, Clemenceau's phrase, *pas de princesse Boche* neatly epitomizing the situation. *Delenda est* was thus early written, palimpsest-like, under her name. She continued only apparently on her way, for may it be said that a person 'can undertake anything in opposition to destiny?' Especially is this true of rulers who have lost public favour.

CHAPTER X

HIDDEN KINGDOM

*'For many are the children of the desolate, more than
of her that hath a husband'*

THOSE accustomed to turn their eyes towards interior forms will find an appealing, an acquitting witness, to show whence Marie Adelaide drew the strength and composure necessary to weather for a while the storms beating about her — that worn prayer book, bulging with holy pictures, mortuary cards and those revelatory slips of paper covered with her very small round handwriting mostly in Latin letters. The whole was held together by a black elastic band whose silver clasp bore an image of Mary and the words *Virgo potens*.

Not long before the death of Paul Eyschen there is a slip bearing the date 21-8-15. The struggle between them was already apparent, the clash inevitable.

*'Von meiner Bösheit fürchte ich alles, aber von Deiner Gute, O Herr, erhoffe ich auch alles.'**

'Wer Mich bekennt den werde ich auch bekennen vor meinem Vater im Himmel, wer Mich aber vor den Menschen verleugnet den werde ich auch verleugnen vor meinem Vater im Himmel.'†

* 'From my wickedness I fear all, but from Thy Goodness, O God, I hope all.'

† 'Whosoever acknowledges me before men will I acknowledge before my Father in heaven . . . Who denies me before men will I also deny before my Father in heaven.'

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*'Mir liegt sehr wenig daran ob ich von Euch oder von was immer für einem menschlichen Gerichtstage gerichtet werde . . . der mich richtet das ist der Herr.'**

'Bereit sein 1,000 Königreiche zu opfern um die Bekehrung der Seelen nur um einen einzigen Schritt voranzubringen, Seelen die zu Grunde gehen weil sie fern von der Kirche in Irrtum, wandeln.'†

The woman who wrote this was not one to allow religious education to be suspended though she lost her head as well as her crown for it, nor be deterred by hints that a minister whose years were full might thereby be gathered to his fathers. She was often to say that 'states without God bear within themselves the seeds of death,' innocently paraphrasing the words of Plato: 'a nation which does not take heed of the gods will surely perish.' More and more as difficulties increased she considered herself to be the agent, however unworthy, of that 'supernatural politic that is of God, really active, dominating the politic of terrestrial government.'‡ In that belief lay her strength.

The cry that she was destined to repeat in far greater darkness is written on the margin of a page: *'Ne me cachez pas la beauté de Votre Visage.'* The 'Magnificat' is in French, delicately vined as in some missal, the hand evidently having lingered over the sublime words. The great hymn 'Anima Christi, sanctifica me,' is in German as is also the Litany of the Holy Ghost, the words *Geist der Andacht und des guten Rates*, spirit

* 'It makes very little difference to me if I am judged by any human tribunal . . . who in the end will judge me is the Lord.'

† 'Be ready to renounce a thousand kingdoms to further even by a single step the conversion of souls who wander in error far from the Church.'

‡ H. Belloc.

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of devotion and of good counsel, heavily underscored.

There is, too, an order of prayer for the week in English, running thus:

Monday — for the Holy Father

T. 2 for the clergy, *religious orders*

W. 3 for all in *mortal sin*

Th 4 for all in their *agony*

F. 5 for the *lukewarm*

S. 6 for those in *sorrow*

S. 7 for *those* whom God wishes us *especially to pray for.* (Her people and her family.)

But mostly her prayers are for light on her path, darkening with each war-year, while her own once-bright figure shows the subtle tarnish of public disfavour. It is more difficult for princes to escape the justified or unjustified wrath of peoples than the reverse. In the former case beheading or exile is the simple solvent. The position of rulers offers no such uncomplicated issue.

It will be seen from all this that Marie Adelaide was possessed of an inner as well as an outer kingdom, and without stress being laid on her secret life no understanding of her public acts can be arrived at. That she has some definite place and influence in the history of her people both her life and death give increasing testimony. But this state and this significance will long remain obscure. She belongs to the little company of chosen souls who take form and place in the world according to what some call the natural working of temperament on environment, others Fate, others Divine Decree. But from whatever vantage ground she is regarded she is one of those

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shrouded figures of history, and with the exception of the recorded acts of her accession, reign and abdication, she remains mysterious to the end, passing swiftly, veiled as the nun she was not to be.

One thing we know of these chosen spirits. After they have heard the august *vocatus* they are driven to look steadily upon the grief of the world—to desire to assuage it. They seek neither personal joys nor physical ease. They give without receiving. Their strength is spent in the meagrely rewarded yet ceaseless struggle of man's mortality with the things of the beyond. Any gazing into the crystal of such lives delivers the most ambiguous answer to their riddle. They live, they die unexplained and unexplainable, shadow of man's eternal dream of holiness and beauty.

We only know of Marie Adelaide that, despite her royal heritage, her kingdom was not of this world.

CHAPTER XI

FIGURE OF FATE

*'Oh, withered is the garland of the war,
The soldier's pole is fallen'*

IN September of 1918, the figure of Marie Adelaide's fate appeared clearly, swiftly, inexorably, approaching down the pathway of events. Though wearing no crown it was sweet and welcome, clothed as it seemed to her inner eye in the brown robe, in the wimple, black veil and long white mantle of a daughter of the great Teresa of Avila. The 'night in a bad inn' as the saint called life, and which Marie Adelaide was certainly finding it, seemed about to be turned into the calm and ordered sanctity of cell and cloister.

In Luxemburg her name had lost its magic and its guarantee. Abroad she was calumniated and decried. In the clash of armies, in the sophistries of peace, in the clamours of greed she stood to lose that uneasy crown. But what of it? Her sister Charlotte's charming head would wear the symbol of their country's independence in simple dignity, without questionings of soul, or self-torments; she would give her signature according to the advice of ministers and counsellors. With Luxemburg all would be well.

On the 28th of September a coalition government had been formed with Emil Reuter at its head; this after long and stormy debates in the Chamber. The

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five men composing it were personal friends though of varying political convictions. Reuter is described as an *Ehrenmann*, a man of honour, mild of nature, very pious. The picture of him kneeling with his wife every morning in the dim Cathedral was particularly reassuring to Marie Adelaide, who always showed him special courtesies, special confidence. He reflected that ever-present sensitivity to religion, to the Church, found in high and low, educated and uneducated, typical not alone of Luxemburg but of Belgium, of the Rhinelands, of Alsace. He was a lawyer by vocation, of political acumen and general culture. He was small of stature with eyes now very kind, now very cool and perspicacious, badly dressed, personally self-deprecatory, adamant in the discharge of his duties. He was destined to be at the head of government during Luxemburg's culminating war-crisis. Past master in politics, for the compromises and expediencies of which Marie Adelaide had so profound an aversion, he also had the gift of speech. Even his opponents gave testimony to his honesty. Nikolaus Welter, Minister of Education in the new Cabinet, and writer of note, who alone has left an account of these days, was ticketed by many of his readers as a Social-Democrat. He declared himself, however, like his colleagues, as standing firmly by the Crown in the event of possible conflict. All were persuaded that the continuity offered by a dynasty would best preserve and insure the independence of Luxemburg. With such a captain, such mates, the little ship of state seemed destined to sight some sort of port in spite of the storms beating about it. It was six weeks

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before the Armistice, even then heavily shrouded.

President Wilson had made his famous pronouncement — the self-determination of nations. His voice seemed then that of one speaking from the clouds of some vast heaven, where mercy consorting with wisdom would bring forth justice. Especially to the frightened, trembling, small nations it sounded like the cry of their salvation. In Luxemburg too. None knew that while it seemed to safeguard, it was often to destroy. That voice was to demand, also, a Republic in Germany — no dealings with the old governing powers of the Empire. If in Germany a Republic, why not one in Luxemburg? The Duchy's independence hung by a thread. Early in October the Chamber begged the protection of this 'wise political fool' as he was later to be rated. Marie Adelaide further appealed to Pope Benedict XV for his help in safeguarding the independence of her land from the nations to the West and South. Luxemburg had lain, as we know, during the whole of the conflict behind the German lines and was thus materially untouched, though her economic problems had grown more difficult with every war-year.

Early November. The combatants were laying down their arms; the Bulgarians, the Turks, even the Austro-Hungarian Colossus, long on an uncertain pedestal and *toujours en retard d'une idée, d'une année, d'un bataillon*.

In the meantime rumours were afloat in the Entente consciousness concerning Luxemburg; the deportment in general of the inhabitants, in especial that of its young ruler from the beginning of the war. Each

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nation that held to its neutrality was not only judged but damned. Its place was with the goats. There is the legend in the Duchy of Clemenceau's saying that 'as far as he was concerned Belgium could have Luxemburg; it was but a land of Boches and *Pfaffen*, (priests).'

More authentic and cautious, if less colourful, are the words of André Tardieu:* 'A last and delicate question was that of Luxemburg. It was all the more delicate as if one were not careful it might give rise to at least an apparent conflict between Belgian and French interests.'

On the 6th of November the German Minister and the German commander announced to Herr Reuter that Luxemburg would of necessity be drawn into the *Etappengebiet*. It thus found itself in the highway of the retreating German armies as they passed over the great viaducts, over the roads of the rain-drenched, mist-enveloped plains below.

Revolution was in full blast in the Central Powers. On a rainy November night Germany's Emperor fled into Holland. The fate of Austria's ruler, whose wife was the sister of Charlotte's acknowledged fiancé, hung in the balance, though the completeness of the tragedy of this *guter Bursch*, this true Viennese *Spiess-burger* who asked of fate but to love and be loved by family and people, could not even then be divined.

Interior devils: disorder, violence, treachery were abroad in the Duchy. The enemies of the dynasty, the advocates of a republic, scattered but vociferous devotees of annexation to France or Belgium, the

* André Tardieu: *La Paix*.

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Communists, the Bolsheviki, all thought that the fruit was ripe for the plucking. 'Revolution is the child of misery and a revolutionary Republic will be the daughter of disaster,' was preached to the wind by the wise men of the Duchy. In such moments the essential qualities of a people alone can save it.

Marie Adelaide's person was in full exposure to the cross-fire of suspicion and accusation. She was the friend of Germany. She had given audience to the German general who first entered Luxemburg territory. She had invited the Kaiser to tea, to dinner, to supper. (That she had received the announcement of his impending arrival while he was on the march, by field-telephone, without the possibility of asking him to defer his visit, was not added.) She had allowed certain of her court officials to serve in the German army. She had given her consent to the engagement of her sister Antonia to the Crown Prince Rupprecht of Bavaria. It had caused the fall of her Ministry. She had planned the annexation of Luxemburg to Germany. She was guilty of any and all crimes that imaginations, still war-fevered, could devise. Her solid, slow, careful-thinking, peace-minded, rose-growing people were not immune from the illness. It went through the land like any other plague. Marie Adelaide was the cause of all their misfortunes. She was the poison in the well. Certain friends of the dynasty sought to cool these fevers, give antidotes to this poison. In vain they recalled the courageous, even imperious, conduct of the young ruler immediately after the entrance of the German army on Luxemburg soil. They tried to show the responsibility of

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Paul Eyschen, President of the Government, who had counselled this or that step and whose advice she had so desperately followed. But he was dead and there was none able or willing to vouch for his responsibility. . . . Marie Adelaide, after her way, was mostly silent in face of the abuse so thickly heaped upon her, but she once said when goaded to desperation:

‘My good Luxemburgers are like all other peoples, inconstant and uncertain in their judgments of their rulers. They blame me for having received German generals who were already in the country as war-occupants and against whom our little army was powerless, and now they would have me receive the Allied generals come into the Duchy who are practically in the same position in Luxemburg, viewed from the standpoint of our neutrality and our independence. There is no reason to it all.’

Long since, in January, 1916, she had stated publicly:

‘All my endeavours point to but one end: to secure to our Fatherland the continuance of its independence and its freedom. I am Luxemburgerin, Luxemburgerin by birth, by long ancestry, Luxemburgerin in heart and in soul. I love my country, I love my people. My first wish is to know that it is independent and prosperous, that they are free and happy.’

Shortly before the Armistice she had voiced the proud and faithful words: ‘I wear the crown of a free and independent State, whose constitution I have given my oath to uphold. I will continue to protect this freedom and this independence. Never in thought or word have I desired the annexation of Luxemburg

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to Germany. Why should I desire it to France or Belgium?’

In the end it was, however, not alone a question of Marie Adelaide’s situation in regard to the Entente powers but in regard to her own people as well. One of those ruthless moments which appear in the history of nations was rapidly approaching in Luxemburg. The people wanted a scapegoat. They took Marie Adelaide. On her slim young form the sins of her own people and a selection of those of Europe were to be hung. She was to be driven outside her city gates. . . . In October 1918, when the storm was already beating mercilessly about her, she sent a strange, proud letter to her Minister of State:

‘In any new arrangements necessitated by the probable end of war there is no need to show consideration for my person; I am contemplating abdication. For the future of the Luxemburg dynasty the securing of heirs is an essential condition. I shall never marry. My sister Charlotte’ she ended, ‘has entered into an engagement with her cousin Prince Felix of Bourbon Parma. An early marriage is desirable.’ Again bidding her minister not to take her person in any wise into consideration she closed this strange document. Reuter made the letter known only to his immediate colleagues, judging the times, already troublous enough, not expedient for its publication.

On the ninth day of that portentous November things became even more complicated for Luxemburg, for its young ruler. The Armistice was but two days distant, when the old order of Europe was to be changed in its entirety as an engine is suddenly and

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disastrously reversed, and with what further agonies for millions could not even then be forecast.

On that day Marie Adelaide's cousin, Prince Max of Baden, was to hand the German Empire over to a saddle-maker with the words: 'Herr Ebert, I commit the German Empire to your keeping.' The saddle-maker was to answer: 'I have lost two sons for this Empire. . . .'

Revolution was battering at the very gates of Luxemburg. Over her great viaducts straggling groups of indigenous malcontents were to be seen. Mingling with the retreating armies entered the destructive figure of Bolshevism. The Place d'Armes, the Place Guillaume were in uproar. The youths of the Military School had torn the M.A. from their *tschakos*, and were singing the ancient refrain: *Muss ich denn, muss ich denn vom Staedtle hinaus?*

Prime Minister Reuter and several of his colleagues decided to go to Castle Berg to let their young ruler know of the dangers awaiting not only Luxemburg but her own person.

She received them in her cabinet in a short black gown, without adornment of any kind save her accustomed, friendly yet inviolable smile, her reserved yet trusting look.

They first laid these personal dangers before her. She only raised her head higher and made a gesture of unconcern. When at last they indicated with many hemmings and hawings that her remaining on the throne would probably not meet with the favour of the Entente, she sank back into her great arm-chair. Her right hand fell upon the table. Her soft smile

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gave place to grave lines about her mouth. Her head bent for a moment upon her slim, white neck. It was one thing to go — another to be sent. But almost immediately she raised herself proudly, her great eyes looked quietly and with a disconcerting clarity at the men before her, but after her habit she did nothing to break the heavy silence.

‘If Major General Tesmer is not mistaken and the revolutionary movement grows, there will be trouble in the town to-morrow,’ said one of the ministers at last.

‘If so, my place is there, in the city,’ she answered quickly. They cried out against this. Then suddenly she herself broached the matter uppermost in their minds, but quietly, without bitterness, as of something already relinquished, put aside. ‘My abdication will be a deliverance for me personally, but I must, before giving it, ascertain the real wish of my people. To that alone I will bow. It is for you to indicate the form and procedure.’

As she pronounced these words, the colour came back to her young cheeks; to her lips, which had been cut as from marble, her smile returned; her eyes which has been for a moment so dark and remote were again clear and friendly. Silence. Then in complete composure, with a courteous but unmistakable gesture of her right hand, rising, she dismissed her ministers.

Two days after came the Armistice. It found the Luxemburgers occupied not alone with their interior situation but with that engendered by the natural desires of France and Belgium.

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On the morning of November 11th, Marie Adelaide again received the members of her government. They spoke at first of things far from the real reason for their presence — of the laying down of arms all over Europe, of the revolutionary uprising in Luxemburg, of the foundation of the working-man and peasant council. Not one of them had the heart to say immediately in the face of that youthful grace, candour and confidence what was trembling on each lip. She listened entrenched behind her usual silence. They asked at last if it would not be more pleasing to her to speak with them one by one, according to the party to which each belonged rather than collectively, when any word from her lips might bring to the fore certain underlying differences in their own opinions. To this she confessed, and they arranged to return the next day.

Only one of her ministers, Nikolaus Welter, has given a record of his reception by the young ruler, in his book *Im Dienste*, (Years of Service).

‘A little before four o’clock I was received by her Royal Highness. I placed the general political situation before her; naturally my own position in regard to it. I then went on to speak openly of the unfavourable rumours that were in the wind concerning the person of the Sovereign herself, even of the various mistakes attributed to her. The Grand Duchess listened with her usual composure, then spoke straightforwardly, decisively, but also very proudly, her Braganza blood in ascendance:

‘I need not tell you how painful it is to me that my best intentions are continually misunderstood, that

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my loyalty to my people, to my land, is doubted, even denied.'

Welter then confessed his especial disapproval of one of her acts: 'The Prussian general who was the first to break Luxemburg's neutrality should not under any circumstances have been received by your Royal Highness.'

With a sharp cut to her voice the Grand Duchess countered this by saying:

'You are right. It was stupid. But I was counselled to do it.'

It was the shade of Paul Eyschen that arose and passed before her, but she laid no accusation on his grave.

The record continues: 'When I made allusion to some question of interior policy which had been brought to her attention vainly, she drew her slim figure to its full height, threw her charming head back and answered proudly:

'“Am I compelled by our Constitution, to sign blindly and immediately everything my ministers lay before me?”'

To this the answer ran:

'Your Royal Highness, the sworn constitution before which all citizens have equal rights must alone determine the acts of modern rulers. This limitation may not always be easy for the sovereign . . . The Prime Minister must, however, assume responsibility before the people as well as before his sovereign for any governmental act. In his person and by his position he is answerable to the Chamber for any decision he demands from the ruler, a refusal from

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whom always indicates a lack of confidence; he knows then that only one way is open to him — resignation.'

Marie Adelaide, looking at him with very wide open eyes, made no answer. The ghost of Eyschen again, the figures of Thorn, ex-attorney general, anti-clerical; of Kauffman, ex-director of Finance; of Reuter then Prime Minister, doubtless defiled before her. After a silence equally difficult on both sides to break she drew a deep breath, made a movement of her shoulders as if under an uncomfortable yoke and answered, non-committally 'Yes, I suppose that is so.' Then she leaned her head a moment against the high carved back of the great arm-chair in which she was sitting and added (she, always so reticent of her personal feeling and in the most painful embarrassment), 'But it comes very hard to me.'

Welter then bowed deeply, saying, 'This confession does honour to your Royal Highness and I thank you for the confidence you have shown me.'

Backing out of the room he doubtless also thanked God that the interview was over. The impasse was only too evident.

This audience was but one example of the difficulties confronting Marie Adelaide in that portentous week of November 11th. No ruler, however small his territory, could pass through the fire and blood of the war uncharred, unsmeared, above all Luxemburg's, holder as she was of that century-rusted, blood-stained key to the Eastern and Western doors.

It must be remembered that the choice presented to Marie Adelaide seemed to be that between two crowns, not the laying aside of a single one. In this she

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doubtless found the composure that marked her demeanour in those troublous times. It was the sweet *Veni, sponsa mea*, that she seemed to hear above the clash of battle, above the clamours of greed following so closely on the blood cries.

That evening the red flag hung over the door of the old Rathhaus; the Place d'Armes was in uproar. 'Down with the House of Nassau-Braganza!' 'Proclaim the Republic!' was heard on all sides.

In the noise and disorder those faithful voices crying the ancient cry of Luxemburg, 'We want to remain what we are,' were for the moment lost. The *Hemecht* was in its age-old danger.

As for Marie Adelaide she was but wreckage in a world of wrecks, and the survivors, all of them, swimming with the water up to their mouths cared nothing for that bit labelled with her name.

CHAPTER XII

ENTRY OF ALLIED TROOPS INTO LUXEMBURG

'New Things and Old'

AN eye-witness gives us the following picture.* 'Since November 11th, the great retreat of the German armies had been in full force. At first somewhat chaotically. Then in an orderly way. The troops still wore their former devices and decorations. Nothing Bolshevistic was observable in their solemn and measured return to the Fatherland. They looked straight ahead, a fixed expression on their haggard, seamed faces, as they marched under the floating banners of the allied forces.

'The next day came the Liberators. First the Americans. On November 20th, General Parker announced the approaching arrival of General John J. Pershing.

'On the 21st he appeared. With him his troops. Indescribable rejoicings. General Pershing immediately went to the Palace to greet the Grand Duchess. He reviewed, at her side, on the balcony, the troops defiling beneath. As the first khaki-coloured ranks passed through the Wilhelmstrasse by the Chamber of Deputies my heart beat fast. Wearing flat-brimmed, low helmets, carrying long, narrow canvas knapsacks, and with light, springy step those magnificent young

* Nikolaus Welter: *Im Dienste.*

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men passed us — splendid figures. A joy for eye and *Gemüth* (heart).*

‘As they answered the command “Eyes to the left,” said to myself “These brave boys are the saviours of your country.” My thanks went out to them.

‘It was reproached me by a friend of differing politics that I had arranged for Marie Adelaide’s appearance on the balcony with General Pershing at her side in order to procure for myself a sort of “political *Jungfrauschaft*” (virginity). “You got the best of me and the party,” he continued, “and for whom? For the sake of a young girl, who leads the nation by the nose!”’

But instead of ‘leading the country by the nose,’ the young girl herself was to be led by it — and as a lamb to the slaughter.

It was the balcony underneath and to each side of which are set so mindfully the records of Luxemburg’s strange and glittering past: the cross of Burgundy; the casque and device of Henry VII, *Judicate juste*; John the Blind’s *Ich dien*; the head of Ermesinde with the words *Libertate Prosperitas* of her

* Of this word, untranslatable, Goethe says: ‘The translator must proceed until he reaches the untranslatable; and then only will he have an idea of a foreign nation and a foreign tongue.’

That strange, multi-parented language of Luxemburg has been enriched by certain American words. ‘Thanksgiving’ (the patois rendering is unrecognizable) is used adjectivally to denote open-handedness, commemorative of that November day of 1918 when well-nourished, good-natured, be-weaponed, khaki-clad beings from a land of inexhaustible riches let fall crumbs from their groaning tables, dressed in the little town of Fels, lying under the shadow of an ancient stronghold. ‘Bully-beef’ denotes any old empty tin can; the encouraging ‘all right,’ the not inhospitably meant ‘get out’ have apparently come to stay. It is the latest example of the manner in which through the ages the patois of Luxemburg has been formed.

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charter; near her the elusive, deathless Melusina. Marie Adelaide took her destined place among them. Tall-statured beside the taller form of General Pershing she watched, motionless as those ancestral visages—eyes intent, lips curved enigmatically—the khaki-clad figures of the New World defile before her—sign and symbol of one more exotic epoch in her Duchy's history.

'The next day came the French,' Welter continues, 'the 109th regiment at whose head was Lieutenant-Colonel Randier. The Luxemburgers fell over themselves. Each helmet was crowned with a wreath. Each rifle resembled a blossoming rod of peace.

'Lieutenant-Colonel Randier and Commandant de Beaucoudray sat upon their dark horses like heroes cast in bronze. Not a muscle moved. Out of devastation and death they had come to a fortunately-spared people, into an unscathed and festal city. . . They seemed like figures out of an antique world.

'On November 25th, Marshal Foch appeared unannounced. That afternoon his ordnance officer went to the grand ducal palace. But the sovereign was at Castle Berg; neither were any members of the government at hand. Towards five o'clock he left word for the Minister of State that his departure was urgent but that he would soon be again in the city.'

CHAPTER XIII

PEACE

'Grandeurs et Misères d'une Victoire'

FROM the day of the Armistice the storms in the Chamber had increased, paradoxically, in violence. Peace, that least and last desire of the human heart, was even noisier than war. On December 5th the weather was as wintry within as without. The Socialist element in the hope of overthrowing the dynasty laid before the Chamber for examination the two following resolutions, skilfully tuned to accord with the *état d'âme* of the victors:

(1) The relations of the Crown to the victorious powers; the attitude of the members of the reigning house to those states which violated our neutrality, as for instance the reception of Kaiser Wilhelm, his family, his Chancellor.

(2) Those actions of the dynasty and of those in its entourage which tended to compromise our neutrality and lessen the dignity of our country. The results of this examination to be brought to the attention of the guarantors of the Congress of London, May 11th, 1867.

On December 10th, the Left again brought up the dynastic question, this time neatly linking it with that of food supplies. The Belgian Press began to speak of the 'personal union' with Belgium as the natural solution of Luxemburg's economic difficulties.

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A few patriots thought within themselves, 'Take care, Luxemburgers, take care what you do, or the bread basket will hang even higher.'

The sorties against Marie Adelaide were more frequent, the abuse thicker: 'The Crown is condemned,' the Socialists cried, 'Marie Adelaide must go.' A quite unnecessary *Minister Krisis* followed. On December 14th the entire government handed in its resignation to the Sovereign. Thereupon arose naturally the question of the position of the country. The *Landesmutter* like Niobe was left without children. Unlike Niobe she wept their loss in secret. Even the foreign representatives did not find their way back to Luxemburg. The telegram that the Grand Duchess sent to the Entente Government thanking it for the liberation of the land got the coldest of receptions. Especially from President Poincaré and King Albert.

The well-known Socialist Destrée openly demanded the Grand Duchy's immediate annexation to Belgium, saying that as Alsace-Lorraine belonged to France so Luxemburg belonged to Belgium. This was nothing new in the history of the Duchy past or present. In October of 1916 Belgium's representative in Paris, Baron de Gaissier d'Hestroy, had declared that Luxemburg would probably not remain independent and that its return to Belgium was greatly desired by his country.

Luxemburg was faced, however, with the necessity of making new economic arrangements. Those age-old treaties with Germany were finished. What to do? It was not only a dynastic question but one of the stomachs

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of the people as well. The Sovereign, however, guiltless, might, given the feelings of the Entente, stand in the way of the solution of these economic questions, might even jeopardize the independence of the Grand Duchy. This was all gone over with as much consideration as the situation allowed in the presence of Marie Adelaide at Castle Berg. She listened coldly, silently to the discussion, then with a sudden flame in her cheeks and in quick, bitter accents cried:

‘At the command of foreign powers I will not, I must not go. My withdrawal at this uncertain moment might mean the loss of our independence or lead eventually to it. Only to insure the interior peace of the land will I go. This is my decision — clear, irrevocable,’ and she put her small hand down heavily upon the table. She knew herself to be alone, save for those accompanying events over which she had little or no control.

Then followed crisis on crisis in the Chamber. One thing alone was clear. Out of the many-sided discussions emerged the necessity of entering into some sort of relations, political and economic, with the victors.

It was finally decided that three men of the Reuter ministry should go to Paris, Mecca of the world. These men were Reuter himself, Welter and Liesch. All in their different ways were adherents to the dynasty. The clouds from the West and South were menacing. A devastating tempest seemed about to break over the ancient Bock. A tall, slender, dark-robed figure, discredited at home, despised abroad, yet made of iron was, in the end, to be the lightning rod that preserved intact that precious edifice of their

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independence fashioned out of other nation's wars, blood- and tear-cemented.

On December 11th the Ministry was finally dissolved. Luxemburg was without a government except that represented by the person of its sovereign. The House of Nassau-Braganza was increasingly anathema in France. Little or nothing remained to the Luxemburgers except what they might unpleasantly encounter as they felt about in the dark.

On Sunday, December 15th, Marshal Foch appeared again in the ancient city. That same afternoon he made a visit to the Grand Duchess. Neither he nor she — one more tight-lipped than the other — has left any record of it.

He set up his headquarters in the Conservatory building. The scattered remains of Luxemburg's government sought him out there, going in by the French sentinel whose shelter-box was planted at the entrance. Herr Welter's account is as follows:

'We were ushered into the spacious, well-lighted, ground-floor room. Foch got up from behind a big table, covered with papers, to greet us: a thick-set, powerfully-built soldier, in the plainest of uniforms, without a single decoration on his breast. His face was pale, the eyes deeply circled, the features somewhat drawn as of one enduring a hidden bodily ailment. The effect of the thick grey eyebrows, the heavy grey moustache, the massive chin, was softened by the friendliness of his small, sharp eyes, from which flashed like lightning that look of one accustomed to command. All was mellowed by the kindly smile that played about his narrow lips. He shook us each

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warmly by the hand. The Minister of State in a short speech proceeded to thank the conqueror and liberator. A short silence. Foch then made an evidently carefully-thought-out answer that counted on its sure effect, further underscored by energetic gestures of arm and fist.

"Yes, gentlemen," he said, "we have conquered. We withheld our forward march because we so wished, otherwise we would have been in a few weeks, in a few months, on the Rhine, over the Rhine, in Berlin; *bref*, as far as we desired. It was a question of strength. We withstood the storm because we were strong (here more energetic gestures of arm and fist). Strength lies, however, in union. Endeavour also to be strong. For that you need to annex yourself to a powerful nation. How you will bring this about is a question for those in power. Consider that we owe our salvation to our strength alone; that a Germany with seventy million inhabitants is always a dangerous neighbour. Therefore, as I have said, unite with one who is strong; safeguard yourselves for the future. Introduce military service. Try to protect yourselves from Germany by fortifications. (Shades of Vauban!) Be strong, look out."

"These words made me hot, almost giddy. I understood. The Marshal meant military annexation to France! The relinquishing of our neutrality! At the same time came the thought: Foch is a soldier. He speaks as a soldier, also as a Frenchman.

"The conversation then touched on the question of provisioning the country. We remarked that we also in that regard had not had an easy time.

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“Don’t complain,” he interrupted passionately. “You have no right to complain. You should see the Aisne country, the Somme, the Argonne! For a hundred to two hundred kilometres long, from thirty to fifty kilometres wide no wall, no tree — everything razed to the ground. In towns like Noyon, Roye, Bapaume, Fleury and in many others there are only bits of wall no higher than this table.” His left hand struck heavily again upon its edge.

“For the rest, gentlemen,” he ended more quietly, a smile on his face, “I have good news for you from Paris.”

He then went to the door of the next room, his heavy, broad step giving a further importance to his “full-marrowed” figure, setting in relief that elemental force of which he had given so many proofs.

A man of medium height, youthfully slim, even more simply garbed than Foch entered.

The Marshal introduced him: “General Weygand,* my collaborator and friend, from whom I have no secrets.”

Weygand, Foch’s chief of staff, his right hand, the companion of his victories! At first sight one was his friend.

Weygand then gave Foch a telegram. The Marshal

* ‘C’est que Weygand est quelqu’un. Laid — il est laid, contrefait, torturé, mal foutu. C’est un homme qui a du recevoir des coups de pied au derrière quand il était encore dans les limbes. Mais il est intelligent. Il a je ne sais quoi, une sorte de feu sombre . . . Weygand est un homme . . . dangereux, capable dans un moment de crise d’aller très loin . . . Dangereux mais précieux et ayant une énorme qualité: sachant faire son travail sans en parler, sans qu’on en parle . . . Ce n’est pas que Foch soit sot; mais il a un génie bon enfant et simpliste. L’autre y a ajouté quelque chose de tendu et profond.’

Jean Martet: *Clemenceau Peint par Lui-même*. (1930.)

saying "Here is something you will be glad to hear," read:

' "*Le Ministre des Affaires Étrangères ne voit aucun inconvénient à ce que M. le Président du Conseil avec les quelques hauts fonctionnaires dont question se rende à Paris pour y discuter avec le Ministre ou avec Monsieur Mollard des questions de ravitaillement et autres.*"

' "Thus you see, gentlemen, you are expected." He then folded the paper and laid it on the table. "You will go, of course, and I myself will attend to your passports and other matters. I wish you a good journey. A happy return."

'Renewed handshakes, a friendly look, an encouraging nod and the mighty, hoary-headed one sat down again behind his table. General Weygand showed us out.

'The conversation naturally made a great effect. General Foch is "someone," *eine Natur* (a "nature"). Is his a great mind? In any case a great will. Whoever has to do with him must look out. He goes straight to his goal like a high-powered machine that can flatten out steel plates and throw down walls. The conditions of peace imposed on Germany show this, also the iron manner in which they were carried out.

'That same afternoon General de la Tour, made Commandant de la Place de Luxemburg spoke to the Government. A friendly, grey-haired man of charming personality and smooth, lithe movements. He wore the French service cap sideways on his white-bandaged

* The Minister for Foreign Affairs sees no reason why the President of the Council with those high functionaries of which there is question should not come to Paris to discuss with the Minister or with M. Mollard questions of supplies and other matters.

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head, having been wounded in a recent attack. He said that he hoped that the cordial relations existing between the Government and his predecessor would be shown to him. We felt that these words came from his heart . . . Then we prepared for our journey to Paris.

'December 18th found us at Arlon.* King Albert was visiting officially his faithful, greatly-tried town. The Luxemburg Chamber had sent a deputation; also the Government, fully represented, had betaken itself there. We wanted to show our Belgian neighbours and cousins our fullest goodwill. Obscured at first by a pouring rain, the day was later to reveal itself a weighty one. For myself I realized suddenly in the Cathedral what it is to be a popular prince, the pride, the darling, the glory of a people. The sight of that thin, dauntless man with his somewhat melancholy, almost shy, mien moved me to my innermost soul.

'But he, too, was the prisoner of political policies. As the Luxemburg delegation presented itself he found cordial words of thanks and friendship for the members of the Chamber as representatives of the people.

'Minister of State Reuter had also in his address given him greetings from the Grand Duchess. But in his answer the King made no reference to our sovereign, his cousin. Instead he ended with a remark that caused us to prick up our ears.

'“By the favoured position which Belgium to-day

* The Marquisate of Arlon was among the bridal gifts of Valeran III to the Countess Ermesinde and was part of Luxemburg during six centuries.

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enjoys because of her victory and the confidence of the Powers, her protection will be extended to the Luxemburg nation as soon as this is asked for, and in the measure of her strength Belgium will come to the Duchy's aid, defending as far as they are confided to her, its moral and material interests."

"Though clearly and prudently spoken, it was for us too coldly business-like. . . . As for Marie Adelaide her name was not mentioned by her cousin, the chivalrous King Albert. . . ."

Behind all this was that slender, dark-garbed, girlish figure, armed with a will of iron whose pale face was indecipherable with its withdrawn glance, its still often smiling mouth. The neutrality of her land, the independence of her people, the safeguarding of her dynasty were her preoccupations. For herself she neither wished nor expected anything. She was there, sentinel at her post, till she should be relieved as she hoped by her lovely sister, ruler, too, by the grace of God. And it is to be wondered why 'by the grace of God' has fallen into such disfavour and why the will of changing and hungry political parties is deemed superior.

CHAPTER XIV

‘MARIE ADELAIDE MUST GO’

*‘Nations were troubled and kingdoms
were cast down’*

WE will turn for a moment from that steadfast figure up against the wall, tiny heels dug in, to follow briefly the fluctuating fortunes of the Luxemburg delegation to Paris, for there the *cas Nassau-Braganza* was destined to be settled. *Nach Paris* was the banner cry of the three ministers, but with changed import. They went by motor to Nancy where they were to take the train, spending the night in the station ‘huddled about the none-too-hot stove like sick hens.’ At 5.30 of a snowy morning the train came in ice-encased, crowded to the steps. The magic word ‘Foch,’ was an Open Sesame to a small three-seated compartment whose occupants roundly demurred at three ‘Boches’ (they bore the blond stamp of their fatherland upon them) taking the places of good Frenchmen.

They were met at the Gare de l’Est by the Luxemburg Chargé d’Affaires with the longest of faces.

‘Why on earth have you come to Paris? Didn’t you get my telegram telling you to remain at home? Nobody will receive you, not even M. Mollard. I return myself this evening. Come with me.’ They gave him a look. ‘If you so wish, M. Le Clère, go; we

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remain.' He did in fact depart. The Luxemburg Consul-General who was at the same time Belgian Consul-General further told them that no official would receive them and that they would be lucky to get into an hotel much less into a Ministry.

Despite these discouragements they found their way that day to M. Armand Mollard, French Minister to Luxemburg. He received them warmly, then passed the traditional 'buck,' advising Reuter to write to the Minister of Foreign Affairs begging for an interview. The next day Herr Welter sought out Count de Fels, a good friend of Luxemburg. He had a big house, entertained lavishly, and was acquainted with the currents and counter-currents of the situation. In spite of the many accusations brought against Marie Adelaide he was convinced that France would come to some arrangement with her. 'Luxemburg must remain independent and make economic treaties with France. Look out for Belgium' was his advice. He further promised to hunt up a key to M. Mollard's door. Unfortunately he was not a Luxemburger. One who was, but who wishes to remain anonymous, pointed out to them that Belgium was the danger point for Luxemburg. 'France in a fateful hour had, through Ribot, promised the Duchy to Belgium; Pichon and Clemenceau are of the opinion that Ribot's promise must be kept. Our position is dangerous in the extreme and the equivocal reputation of Marie Adelaide does not help us. Her so-called Germanophile policies, though you deny them, are wind in the Belgian sails. Turn to the United States, beg their special protection. See the American

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Ambassador or Colonel House. In the folds of the Stars and Stripes we may for a while hide our own red, white and blue.’ Though he showed us the way to the banner-pole, our time was too short to take the somewhat long road he indicated. Our Consul, M. Paul Mersch, invited us to meet several French deputies that evening. None could understand M. Pichon’s cold attitude, his keeping us at a distance.’

Finally on the morning of December 23rd, Welter again, after great difficulties, obtained access to M. Mollard, who had by that time considerably strengthened his barbed-wire defences. After the same cordial greetings and assurances of amity the French Minister to Luxemburg, proceeding to pick out the kernel of the question said, his eye squarely in that of Marie Adelaide’s Minister of Public Instruction, ‘the enemies of the Grand Duchy’s independence are to be found in other quarters than ours.’ Then asking if he wished proof of France’s good intentions he opened the drawer of his writing-table and waved a letter at Welter who, perhaps too delicately, made a slight gesture of refusal, black on white being the indicated and last, though not always secure, refuge of statesmen.

‘We take your word for it. What we want above all to know is France’s attitude in regard to the Grand Duchess Marie Adelaide?’

‘Oh,’ answered M. Mollard quickly, and with a gesture that showed me the palms of his hands, ‘on that subject the French Minister can give you no answer.’

‘I understand, but my question is not put to the Minister, but to M. Armand Mollard. Why does not

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the French Minister to Luxemburg return to his post?"

He laughed, gave me a sharp look and after a pause: 'Good. M. Mollard answers you, but under assurances of secrecy. The French Minister to Luxemburg does not return because the French government won't have anything to do with Marie Adelaide. She has—allow me to put it so—been guilty of too many stupidities. She must go.'

'I understand your feeling, but it is difficult to bring to the Grand Duchess's attention the necessity of her abdication. You must convince the head of our government, M. Reuter, of this.'

'I will consider the matter,' M. Mollard answered.

'Let us assume that Marie Adelaide abdicates. What is the position of France towards the dynasty? A Luxemburg Republic is an impossible thing.'

'You can be quiet as to that; France's most ardent desire is that Luxemburg remain independent with its own sovereign. To the dynasty the Republic has no objections.'

'Then one of Marie Adelaide's sisters can succeed her?'

'Naturally.'

'But which? Princess Charlotte is the fiancée of Prince Felix of Bourbon-Parma, who served in the Austrian Army. Princess Antonia is the fiancée of the Crown Prince Rupprecht of Bavaria, and as such is eliminated. Princess Hilda, the third of the sisters, would not for a moment take into consideration the succession. The two younger sisters are minors which would mean a regency under the Grand Duchess

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mother, and to that France would probably not consent.’

‘No, that wouldn’t do.’

‘There remains then only the Princess Charlotte. In spite of her *fiançailles* France could come to an arrangement with her. She would be, according to my judgment, the only appropriate choice.’

Mollard was silent a moment. Then with a slight snap of his fingers in the air, ‘And why not? Even if the Prince has served in the Austrian Army?’

‘He never fought against France, M. Mollard, he was in the Red Cross, and his two brothers, Sixtus and René, you know —’

‘Yes, yes, and after all he is a Bourbon — which means a Frenchman. Give me time to consider. We will speak of the matter again.’

Welter, who was lodging with a relative next saw his two colleagues at the evening meal. He felt that he had great news for them. Reuter, however, had the top apple, bitter though it was.

‘You don’t know,’ began this latter immediately, ‘what happened to Liesch and myself in your absence. At five o’clock we were summoned to the Quai d’Orsay.’

At Welter’s astonished expression, Liesch hastened to exclaim: ‘You can be thankful you weren’t there. You didn’t lose anything!’

They recounted that M. Pichon had received them in a friendly manner, saying:

‘Gentlemen, I am going to speak to you quite frankly. The French Government did not intend to receive you. The telegram that you got through

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Marshal Foch was the result of some misunderstanding. Our only intention was to allow the Grand Ducal Government a chance to get into communication with those to whom they could speak of economic and related matters. The French Government cannot receive, as such, the Ministers of the Grand Duchess. I decided to speak with you only because I wished to show you the courtesy and because of the insistent demand of M. Mollard. Things have taken place in these last years in Luxemburg which in the natural course of events would lead to a rupture between the two countries. This is the reason why M. Mollard has not returned to his post.'

A pause. Liesch then said, 'We thank you for your outspoken words. Things are now clarified. You indicate certain matters and misunderstandings concerning which this is not the moment for discussion. I would like at least to say that the present government is entirely guiltless as regards these events.'

'Do not misunderstand me. For the Luxemburg Ministers as such we feel the greatest sympathy, and if the French Government does not receive them it is only because they are the representatives of the Grand Duchess.'

'If such be the situation,' said her Minister of State, rising quickly, 'we will no longer detain you, and we present our compliments.'

M. Pichon, taken aback at this sudden break in the interview, hastened to add, 'Gentlemen, I wish again to assure you that Luxemburg and her people possess France's entire sympathy.'

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‘Luxemburg returns these sentiments, Mr. Minister.’
. . . Upon which, after appropriate farewells, they left the palace of the Quai d’Orsay.

There was among the three men assembled for that evening meal but one idea, one fear. If that was the only news they could take home with them, then it was not simply a question of the fall of Marie Adelaide, but probably of the dynasty. If the dynasty fell one thing was sure: Luxemburg as Republic bore the death-wound of its independence. It would fall to Belgium or to France. The only solution was the abdication of Marie Adelaide and the recognition of the Princess Charlotte. How to bring this about with the least damage, the greatest guarantee of success was their one preoccupation.

After a cheerless Christmas in Nancy the delegation arrived in the Grand Duchy on December 26th. With one hand they had been bidden to take the Crown from the head of their ruler; with the other they were seeking to place it uncertainly upon that of her sister. Ominous Christmas greeting to their government and to their Land.

The following day they sent a report of their journey to the Grand Duchess. She realized then that there was no salvation for her. Proudly she determined at least to choose her own way and moment for going.

Then came word from Paris that neither would Charlotte be recognized. This was too much for the Luxemburgers. They were ready to throw one sister to the wolves — not a second.

The Right immediately sent out lists in favour of the dynasty which had thousands of signatures.

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Reuter's desire was not only to save the House of Nassau, but the person of his sovereign as well. An abyss might open between her going and her sister's coming. In it the independence of Luxemburg could only too easily be engulfed. A Crown Council was called on December 30th by the Grand Duchess. Reuter advised a last step: that the Grand Duchess should send her desire 'to maintain' (in its extreme sense) in writing to the Powers in Paris. At first blush literally Marie Adelaide found such a thing impossible; 'unworthy' she called it, the colour deep on her cheeks. Reuter begged her to remember that such a step might not only be for her own good but her duty to the State. Even her mother counselled it: 'Your minister is right, child, make even this sacrifice.'

Bon gré, malgré, Marie Adelaide at last wrote to Paris.

'But only to be of improbable use to the State,' she added to her ministers. This decision was come to in Berg. Reuter dispatched the letter to town where it caught Marshal Foch by ten minutes only . . . A few days and then the unequivocal answer: 'Marie Adelaide must go'

On being informed of this she went out alone into the wintry park. She returned after a long time. Her wind-swept, rain-washed face was impenetrable. She took her place silently at the evening meal. The light from that great crystal chandelier in the dowry of the Grand Duke Adolf's Russian wife fell upon her noble head crowned alone by the gold of her glinting brown hair; upon those young sisters showing, too, each one that beautifying southern strain; upon that

‘MARIE ADELAIDE MUST GO’

anxious mother who had given it to them; upon those solicitous ladies-in-waiting. Admonitory faces of Marie Adelaide’s ancestors looked down upon her — that family group of Nassaus, old Adolf, a child with his brothers and sisters, by Tischbein. . . . Was she, Grand Duchess by the grace of God, no longer to ‘maintain’?

Also for her Minister of State the die was cast. He was to deliver up what he desired to protect. The *cas Nassau-Braganza* had indeed been decided in Paris.

CHAPTER XV

ABDICATION

*'I give this heavy weight from off my head,
And this unwieldy sceptre from my hand;
With mine own tears I wash away my balm;
With mine own hand I give away my crown;
With mine own tongue deny my sacred state;
With mine own breath release all duteous oaths'*

SHORTLY after eight o'clock of the fog-darkened day of January 9th, Marie Adelaide's ministers, heavy-hearted, somewhat shame-faced, slow-stepping men girded for an inexpressibly distasteful duty, appeared again at Castle Berg. That morning a powerful woman of the Duchy had cried out to them, 'You are all cowards. You should defend the rights of that poor child with your very blood if need be!' They were on their way to disinherit her. For this greater courage, one of them pointed out, was needed than to sustain her.

Prime Minister Reuter entered first the presence of his young sovereign. He was embarrassed, deprecatory, in his usual badly-fitting clothes; upon his countenance the traces of a sleepless night, but his kind eyes were never kinder. The others followed closely.

Marie Adelaide, dressed in the same simple dark,

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short gown received them in the small, pink-hung reception room next the larger one where her desk was and where she had the habit of receiving her ministers when there were state documents to be signed.

Her face was of a luminous pallor that set off the blueness of her great, darkly-circled eyes. She asked quietly in her full, low-pitched voice:

‘Gentlemen, why do you wish to see me at this early hour?’

After a slight pause Reuter, as was his unwelcome privilege, spoke for the others. The words he had to say were less and less easy of utterance as he stood looking into those trusting, steadfast eyes.

‘The country is in peril. It is not only a question of the dynasty but of our independence, of our very existence. The brusque refusal of France to have anything to do with us under —’ he hesitated — ‘the existing circumstances can bring about endless economic as well as political difficulties. There is but one way . . .’ he paused again.

At his final words, ‘There is but one way’, the colour entirely left Marie Adelaide’s face, but she drew herself up proudly holding that flower-like head very erect on her long, beautiful neck and in a firm voice that lost nothing of the grave sweetness of its natural timbre answered:

‘My first thought must be for my country, and on your assurance, gentlemen, that there is but one way,’ here she held her head even higher, ‘I will gladly take it. I demand but one thing: that my sister Charlotte take my place. I will speak to her. I will

prepare her for what lies before her. Return, gentlemen, to-morrow morning and I will give you her answer and my own.'

Always chary of word, and having made the essential communication, with a slight, proud gesture, a still perfectly composed mien, she again dismissed her ministers.

Of that hour when she was left alone, a slender, dark-robed figure in the pink-hung reception room with its Louis Quinze panellings, its many *bibelots*, there is no record. The thoughts that filled her young heart, too early given over to care and conflict will never be fully known. One alone her subsequent words and acts reveal. Rid of the throne not by her own wish nor any cowardly contriving to escape responsibility, there would be no longer let or hindrance to her desire for the conventual life. On the other hand she was still plagued by indecision as to what was her real duty; to hold her thorny crown fast in her bleeding hands or take what seemed the easiest way, a fear that in so readily abdicating she might be following out her private desires rather than discharging her royal duty. That black-robed figure stood alone at the crossways.

On leaving the little pink room she went, as was natural, to her mother's apartments to talk over with her the practical aspects of the situation. Of her inner thoughts she had small habit of conversing. The Grand Duchess Marie Anne afterwards declared that Marie Adelaide's decision to abdicate was irrevocably taken. It was simply a matter of the most suitable form.

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Her first words as she entered her mother's presence after kissing her hand, were:

'Now I am free.'

That day she spent with her family; went through many papers on her desk; had a short talk with the Princess Charlotte in her own apartment where quietly she offered her a crown. Then she occupied herself with the care of her animals, keeping her personal life in its usual equilibrium.

The next morning she sent word to her anxiously awaiting ministers that she was ready to abdicate on that very day, if the dynastic party, the Right, would declare it necessary for the welfare of the country.

The *Rechtspartei* received this answer with the respect and admiration that it merited but replied in turn that such a responsibility did not lie within their powers. They also added that as far as they were concerned they considered that the remaining of the sovereign on the throne could only be for the ultimate good and security of the country. That in any event the decision lay with the Grand Duchess herself and with her ministry. They did not, as will be observed, add that they would defend her rights to the uttermost of their powers. They knew their sovereign for *persona non grata* with the Allied Powers, then in the first intoxication of victory. After the immemorial way of victors they communicated their intoxication to all with whom they had to do.

The next afternoon Reuter drove unaccompanied to Castle Berg to make known to his sovereign the constitutional aspects of the situation.

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Again he was received in that little pink-hung room by that quiet black-robed figure whose mien was still more undaunted, whose steady eyes reflected a new maturity. It was not political instruments that were to bend and break her.

Marie Adelaide realizing from his first words that her abdication and departure from the land of her birth were immediately desired at home and demanded from abroad no matter in what words the matter was disguised, interrupted him quickly:

‘I understand. My remaining in power, though I cannot concede that it would be subversive of the ultimate dignity and good of the country, is not, apparently, desired, certainly not expedient. I understand, too, that my abdication is solely my affair and that of my cabinet. Herr Reuter, I abdicate in favour of my sister Charlotte. . . .’

She arose as she made this statement, with words of comfort to the deeply-moved minister to whom she rendered her decision.

‘Do not be disturbed, Herr Reuter,’ she said simply, on witnessing his emotion, far greater than her own, adding calmly, ‘one must look upon matters and events as they are and as such accept them.’

She thanked him warmly, her gentle smile playing without a single twist of bitterness over her lovely face, for his many faithful services; then dismissed him for the last time.

Again the young, black-robed figure was alone in the pink-hung room with its Louis XV panelling and *bibelots*.

On that same night of January 9th—10th, the

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news of her impending abdication in favour of the Princess Charlotte was, after further consultation with one of her most ardent personal and political defenders, Count de Villers, made known unofficially.

In the meantime the city of Luxemburg was in uproar. In the Wilhelmsplatz noisy Communist and Bolshevist throngs had gathered. Excited leaders were reading summonses to depose the dynasty and replace it by a republic. The cafés were filled with loud-talking, gesticulating groups. About Luxemburg one of her immemorial storms was beating. The stabler elements of the country kept apart from the tumult, but still the disturbances grew in violence. The red flag floated above the city. Luxemburg was a house divided against itself.

The government buildings, the palace, the post office, the banks were guarded by French soldiers, strange and admonitory sight, which finally was to act as a cold douche upon the fever of unrest. Their independence, so precious to every Luxemburger, seemed drawing its last breath. A few faithful ones gathered in anguish about what they thought was its death-bed. This condition, news of which was brought her to Castle Berg, does not seem, however, to have greatly disturbed Marie Adelaide. She knew her sturdy, order-loving, level-headed people well and judged rightly that the unrest would soon spend itself. There would be no butter for anyone on the bread of insurgency. As for her own person she was without fear. The period of proud, heart-breaking indecision was replaced by one of calm acceptance. And always there was that vision of herself exchanging

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a visible crown for one invisible, an earthly kingdom for a heavenly one. Once the storm had passed things would be well with her and with her people. Her understanding of her sister Lotty left her without doubts for the future. Lotty with her majestic appearance, her kind heart, her sense of duty, would be a worthy and normal instrument of government. Lotty, open-natured, was like a many-windowed house. Even on the darkest days there would be no ambiguity. Unlike herself, uncompanioned and uncompanionable, taking refuge in shadowy corners and secret passages.

On that dark afternoon *der edle Ritter*, the noble knight, was to appear and fling for a moment over Marie Adelaide's black-clad young figure the warm, bright colours of romance. Near her the rose of love was ready to blossom. In that solemn hour she might have plucked it, placed it against her breast, might have saved her throne, might have entered on a life of personal happiness and political security.

Prince Xavier of Bourbon Parma had been among the guests at the glittering nuptials of the ill-fated Charles and Zita, his sister. He was, too, the brother of Charlotte's fiancé, Felix, that tall, comely, athletic, ready-smiled prince fitted to his destiny of Consort.

Prince Xavier was more typically Bourbon in appearance, slight of build, dark, with large, bright eyes softened at times by something sombre yet fervent, betraying certain mystical tendencies. As so often these were accompanied by practical gifts, among them a decided business acumen which made

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him devote himself for years quite successfully to the finances, rather tangled, of the splendid estate of Piánore di Lucca belonging to his parents.

He appeared unexpectedly as any Lohengrin at the door of Colmar-Berg on that 9th of November, which held darkly in its cold, autumnal soil the seed of Marie Adelaide's irrevocable disasters. Less shining than other knights of legend, he was clad in the service uniform of an English captain. Idealistic, generous, given to the undertaking of difficult and chivalrous deeds, he was, however, the eternal prince of story come to rescue the princess from her plight. He had long loved her. Their characters had many qualities in common, though his was without that steely, secret element which distinguished Marie Adelaide's. Of a piety equalling hers, it had often been prophesied of him that he was destined to a priestly life. When the war broke out he had, however, immediately engaged himself in the Entente Army. On high authority he had been assured that a marriage with him, who had fought on the side of the Allies, might be the means of preserving to Marie Adelaide the throne of her fathers. By situation and temperament he seemed thus heaven-sent, fitted out of a thousand to safeguard her heritage, to give her the natural joys of heart and home.

Little is known of the conversation that took place between them. All is muted, *à la sourdine*, except a subsequent note sounding that minor key in which Marie Adelaide's life was to lie, when she said to her mother, naturally in favour of a rescue so entirely suitable, as well as complete:

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'I do not desire marriage. My crown I have given to Lotty.'

There was always to be the shyest expression in her eyes at any mention of the Prince's name. She was, she will remain *la grande Diane Ardennaise* of the dead Eyschen's dream, to be embraced alone by death. Her true emblem was the Cross, not the crescent moon, and the nocturnal heavens across which she was to drive were those of the 'dark night of the soul.'

The Prince, he himself later revealed, had at the end desperately begged her at least to allow the reassuring rumour of an engagement with him to be made public, to reach the attention of the Allies; when all danger was passed and she again secure in her succession he gave his solemn promise that if she still so desired he would withdraw absolutely and finally from her life. The sovereign of the war-scarred and beautiful Duchy had answered reproachfully, unforgettably:

'How can I commit myself to such a rumour, lend myself to what in the end would be but a deception? I shall never marry.'

In that same hour Prince Xavier left the castle, but he could not even then accept her decision as final. As he passed out over the threshold into the chill November dusk he was a prey to the darkest and most fully justified forebodings concerning her fate. Before getting into the train that was to carry him away for ever he made a last desperate attempt. He went to the station telephone and besought her to reconsider her decision. Again she refused.

Thus on that day, fatal according to human reckoning, Marie Adelaide renounced at one and the same

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time love and a throne. Her gestures of resignation were on grand lines, all-embracing. Truly *la valeur n'attend pas le nombre des années*. She was twenty-four years old.

On January 10th a proclamation signed by the Ministry was posted in the town bearing the names of Reuter, Welter, Liesch, Neyens, Collart.

'We are desirous of making economic treaties with Belgium and France. The events of the last weeks show that the person of our ruler might hinder these arrangements. Her Royal Highness who has the good of her country alone at heart, has declared herself ready to renounce her throne. She only asks the government to protect the independence of Luxemburg and to assure the dynasty in the person of her sister Charlotte. We, the government, are convinced, too, that the continuance of the dynasty is essential to our national independence. . . . The good of the country forbids us to embark upon the fatal way of anarchy, or of any untimely change. This wish is shared by a great majority of our citizens.'

The Chamber of Deputies presented a disconcerting appearance. The entrance was still guarded by French soldiers. In the corridors steel-helmeted, horizon-blue figures stood about. Fears for the independence of the little land increasingly assailed her ministers. If the French did not snap up the Luxemburg *bonne bouche*, there were the Belgians with open mouths. Everything depended on the inherent common sense, the love of order and independence that at all times have stood the Luxemburgers in

good stead, that have preserved them from powerful and covetous neighbours, from the consequences of their own mistakes. The house divided against itself has for centuries meant clearly to them a house that could not stand. The plebiscite whereby the country maintained the dynasty was 'put over' in spite of France and Belgium, obliged to accept a *fait accompli*. The small but fertile Duchy to the north of the palely-tinted, richly-ored Lorraine would have rounded out French territory most satisfactorily. The Belgians looked upon it as a once integral part of themselves. What had been could be.

Events moved rapidly, kaleidoscopically. Since January 8th the Chamber had been a mass of warring aims and passions full head on against each other. In the session of January 11th, by a sudden move the Socialist deputy Mark proclaimed a republic. It lived a bare twelve hours. The conservative elements, by far the greater, Reuter at their head, had withdrawn. Independence seemed to be falling not between two but between many stools. Certainly the throne was tottering, and the famous Article III according to the family pact of June 30th, 1783, that of the Treaty of Vienna, June 9th, 1815, that of London, May 11th, 1867, providing that the crown be hereditary in the House of Nassau seemed like to become one among countless *chiffons de papier*.

On the thirteenth day of January the Ministry again appeared before the Grand Duchess. At her side for the first time was Charlotte. Wrapped about unassailably with that noble composure, her head held very high, her smile for the moment absent

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from her lips, Marie Adelaide presented her successor. She then begged the Ministry to stand firmly by that beloved sister in the dark, tempestuous hours through which the Fatherland was passing. Charlotte in an unsteady voice, with tears rolling down her cheeks, her beautiful, tall figure somewhat bent, repeated sobbingly this hope. There was a long silence. The ministers looked at Marie Adelaide in reverential wonder, at each other in grief and embarrassment.

They were witnessing the strange, infrequent act of abdication. That of William I. King of the Netherlands, Grand Duke of Luxemburg, had been the last to concern the Duchy. He had done so in his sixty-eighth year that he might be free to marry the charming Countess d'Oultremont, being succeeded by his son William II, first and foremost, as had been his father, King of the Netherlands, incidentally Grand Duke of Luxemburg, where both were rarely seen. But William I's act was that of a man who had lived a lengthy, kingly life, and in his old age desired more than honours and responsibility the companionship of the woman he had long loved, herself not young.

Here all was other. Before their very eyes they saw a virtuous and lovely ruler, born to them alone, only twenty-four years old, resigning her rights of succession on the soil of Luxemburg itself. The occasion was awe-inspiring, to be recorded in the indelible ink of their history, She had indeed,

‘With her own tongue denied her sacred state;
With her own breath released all duteous oaths.’

Finally one of the ministers said, turning from

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Marie Adelaide to Charlotte, become Grand Duchess:

‘Your Royal Highness may count on our utmost support, but it will not be easy.’ Another said, also looking at Charlotte:

‘The times are very difficult, but rest assured that we will do everything in our power to promote order at home and good relations abroad.’

For the moment there was nothing more for those men to say. They were groping about in the dark with but one object, one hope — the continued independence of Luxemburg. Another tall, lovely young woman was there to embody it. They had bowed to the will of the Allies in regard to Marie Adelaide. Interference a second time they would have resented even to the effusion of blood. The Luxemburgers are made of the stern, imperishable stuff from which true nations are cast. Not for nothing is the Duchy the sixth of the earth in iron and ores. Not for nothing did Goethe* say ‘Luxemburg resembles naught but itself.’ Not for nothing did Victor Hugo, dwelling in the shadow of the great ruin of the Castle of Vianden say of Luxemburg:† ‘*il se compose de deux choses également magnifiques et consolantes; l’une sinistre, une ruine, l’autre riante, un peuple. . . .*’

At the session of the Chamber on January 14th, Marie Adelaide’s Minister of State, haggard, sleepless, performed the most difficult duty of his life when he read in a toneless voice the following words in the

* Goethe’s dwelling in the capital is marked by a plaque bearing the words:
‘*Hier wohnte Goethe von 14 bis 22 October, 1792.*’

† Here he completed *L’Année Terrible* and began *Quatre-Vingt-Treize*.
His house in Vianden bears a plaque:

‘*Demeure de Victor Hugo, 1870–1871.*’

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name of that sovereign who possessed his fidelity, his admiration, his affection.

‘Castle Berg,

‘January 9th, 1919.

‘By virtue of the report submitted to me by the Government concerning the conference recently held in Paris between them and the Minister for Foreign Affairs, I have decided to renounce the crown of the Grand Duchy.

‘In the fulfilment of my duties I have always been animated by love for my country and by the desire to further its material and spiritual welfare.

‘I wish to spare the Luxemburg people any difficulties which might hinder the Government in the adjustment of the economic future of the country with the neighbouring nations.

‘The Government will convey my decision to the Chamber of Deputies and my abdication will be ratified by them at the next meeting of Parliament.

‘Conscious of the obligations I assumed on accepting the crown of the Grand Duchy and on swearing to the oath of the Constitution, I now charge the Government to undertake the requisite measures to establish the succession to the throne and to safeguard the independence of the country.

‘At this moment, when the end of the World War has brought the Grand Duchy of Luxemburg to a new chapter in its history, I make known my intention of placing the fate of the country in the hands of the Luxemburg people.

‘In exercising the right assured to the small nations

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by the principles of the new League of Nations, it will be possible for the Luxemburg people to give to any measures freely chosen by them that permanent basis which can only be assured by a common feeling of responsibility.

‘May the Luxemburg people, with the aid of Divine Providence, advance towards a future of peace and prosperity; may they retain inviolate their national traditions and the immeasurable treasure of their independence.

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It was on January 15th at four o’clock of a foggy, melancholy afternoon that the Grand Duchess Charlotte was formally sworn in at Colmar-Berg as ruler of Luxemburg. Across her breast was the broad orange ribbon of the House of Nassau. She was weeping. Marie Adelaide, dry-eyed, with a restrained tenderness said to her, taking her hand:

‘Poor Lotty. Forgive me for having put so heavy a burden upon you.’

Charlotte in a trembling voice, after her oath, after her utterance of the famous ‘*Je maintiendrai*’ of the House of Nassau, read the following words which had been prepared for her:

‘I am proud of the oath that I have just taken before the representatives of the Luxemburg Chamber.

‘I understand this oath to mean that I place above all things the welfare of the people of Luxemburg, that I will live their life, partake both of their joys and of their sorrows, that I will work for and with Luxemburg. . . . That from our united endeavours

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may come for our land a period of prosperity, of interior and exterior happiness.'

In this simple way the new government came into being. It was the Grand Duchess Charlotte who dismissed the ministers. Marie Adelaide standing aside gave no sign save an inexpressibly touching bend of her head to each in proud and final farewell. What then passed between the sisters will never be known. Shortly after Charlotte was seen issuing from the room, weeping, fumbling at the fastening of the uncoveted orange ribbon of which she was in haste to divest herself.

Of that new ruler of Luxemburg a few words will not be out of place. She had inherited much of the traditional Braganza beauty and was of tall and stately appearance. Her open, uncomplicated temperament fitted her to pass through the days that followed without the passionate misgivings, the interior struggles, the indecipherable reserves that characterized her sister. She was destined for the safe and normal things of life.

The Grand Duchess Charlotte's few words on the taking of her oath were followed three days later by a longer proclamation, carefully prepared by her ministers. In it were especially stressed certain democratic reforms of the constitution in accord with the times which, she promised, would have her full consent. Further, that, miraculously preserved from the terrors of battle, division or annexation, the little land's only desire was to continue on its historic way in the light of its new freedom.

'Luxemburgerin in my soul,' she ended, 'I will

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consider it my highest title to consideration to aid in the fulfilment of each and all of the national desires.

‘Castle Berg, January 18th, 1919.’

It was nearly nine months later on November 6th, that the Grand Duchess Charlotte became the bride of Felix of Bourbon Parma. From his earliest youth the Prince had centred on her his hopes and affections. It is said—and the human heart being prone to love of power and place it is probable—that it was his advice to his young fiancée which had given her the courage to accept the undesired crown, symbol of so many trials for Marie Adelaide. But though hidden, a bright dawn was to break on the young couple out of the night of war. They were to find themselves in undisturbed possession of their Duchy, France and Belgium putting each a rein upon the desires of the other. Of the defeated Central Powers there was no question.

The King of England sent congratulations on the auspicious event and diplomatic relations were resumed with Luxemburg in the person of Sir Ronald Graham,* then Minister to the Hague. This was the showiest as well as the most highly prized of the wedding gifts. Those of France and Belgium shone by their absence. The civil ceremony took place in the palace built by the Spanish conquerors. The religious ceremony, held with some pomp, was performed by the Papal Nunzio, Monsignor Nicotra, in the Gothic Cathedral with its Renaissance portals; the tribune from which sounded the wedding hymn was baroque. Again a new pattern

* Now His Britannic Majesty's Ambassador to the Quirinale.

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was woven into the ancient warp and woof of Luxemburg. Again the streets of the historic city, the 'little fortress,' resounded to joyful cries. During the ceremony in the Cathedral the choir sang the old anthem '*Wie Unsre Väter flehten*,' ('As once our fathers supplicated').

At the wedding breakfast the Grand Duchess mother told one of the ministers that it was at her desire and that of the bride that this hymn had been sung; it was the favourite anthem of Marie Adelaide. Eye-witnesses relate of the Grand Duchess Charlotte that, in her heavy white silk gown, with a very long bridal veil covering her abundant hair over which was the glittering diadem that had once enhanced her sister's beauty and dignity, tall of stature, graceful of mien, she presented an almost hieratical picture.

She is now the mother of six children, two of whom are sons, the eldest bearing the name of John, after the Blind King of adventurous memory. This young heir's fate is hid behind the curtain of the future. It is fairly safe, however, to trust that he, if not his heir, will enjoy the simple security of his mother's lot. The succession of Luxemburg, so often upheld by women, is again assured in the male line. The Duchy pursues its peaceful way among the nations. Charlotte speaks the language of her people, made by its history, by the many races who have formed it; her children lisp its strange gutturals. Again the town 'lying high in sun and light' above the winding Alzette and the rushing Petrusse knows tranquillity. Its broad viaducts are swept clean of foreign armies. Over them are brought again only the industries, the arts and crafts of peace.

II

VITA UMBRATILIS

(Life in the Shade)

'The desire of our soul fashions a desert unto itself'

Sir Laurence Shipley

'La morte seconda non li potrà far male'

San Francesco di Assisi



MARIE ADELAIDE
(at the time of her abdication)
(1919)

CHAPTER I

EXILE

*'Everything is only for a day, both that which remembers
and that which is remembered'*

*'Adieu, ma patrie, la plus chère qui a nourri ma jeune
enfance'*

ANOTHER dark, foggy morning, the twenty-eighth of January, 1919. The evening before, Marie Adelaide, surrounded by her mother, her sisters and that lady-in-waiting whom she called her 'sixth sister,' had in irrevocable ways manifested that she had indeed 'given her life' as she once called it, the free gift of which lends it so mysterious a value.

'During the day,' the Countess Anna relates, 'she had been in secret council with her maid. She kept the door of her room locked and there were furtive movings about as of boxes and parcels being carried into it. "A little surprise for this evening," was all she said, and she smiled beseechingly as a child bent on some possibly-to-be-frowned-on act. Dinner was silent and hasty. Our hearts were overflowing with the sorrow of the near parting. Marie Adelaide alone had colour in her cheeks and shining eyes. She looked very, very young, almost the "Maus" of ten years before. When her mother gave the signal to rise, she took her arm saying, "Come," and led the way into her bed-

room. There was an array of silks and velvets — garments of state — of furs, of laces. On a table and commode were some leather cases and a heap of shining objects, — jewels and *bibelots*. We looked at her and then at each other in dismay. She said quickly to her mother, “Thou must choose first.” The Grand Duchess mother turned quite pale, and only not to cast a shadow on that smiling face she limply took one of the cases from the table. After that Marie Adelaide divided the rest into six parts — for her five sisters and for me. She betrayed no regrets, her hand lingered over no single one of her possessions. There was a peculiarly tender and mindful generosity in all she did. She remembered little words of admiration for this or that, forgotten even by us who had voiced them, and apportioned her belongings accordingly.

““Don’t mind,” she answered to every remonstrance or demur, “I shall not need it,” then “blessed be nothing” with her loveliest smile, and a gesture as of deliverance when all had been distributed. She seemed far happier than when, scarcely out of adolescence, she had made her triumphal entry into Luxemburg, ascended her throne.

‘To a final remonstrance made her that evening she quoted the words of St. Augustine:

““Too late have I known Thee, Beauty ever old and ever new.”

‘There was something increasingly bright and unearthly about her. She was as if transfigured before our eyes, as we sat there dumbly, heavily, jewels in our hands and garments across our laps.

‘Later that same night in the dark hour before

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dawn of the day that was to see her departure into exile, she came into my room, shivering in a pink woollen *négligé* held tightly about her form that seemed so tall as she stopped to turn on the electric light. Her face showed traces of something that resembled longing, yearning, rather than agitation. Slipping down on the chair by my bed she spoke quickly, whisperingly:

“I cannot go away without a last word to my people whom I love above all else. They must know a little of what is in my heart.” She made an unfamiliar gesture of hands against her breast, then turned her small palms outwards — empty, symbolic of something relinquished.

‘She took up a small block of paper that she had let fall on her lap and wrote, without a pause, those simple, farewell words that are a part of the history of her Duchy.

“Schloss Berg, January 28th, 1919.

“From all parts of Luxemburg there have come to me countless proofs of remembrance and devotion. They have filled my heart with happiness and gratitude. As it is impossible for me to tell each and every one, as I would wish, what joy and satisfaction these words have occasioned me I desire in this way to lighten my heart and at the same time to express my warmest, my most fervent gratitude. I thank from my innermost soul all those who during my reign, and especially those who in these last days, in word and act, in thought and prayer, have stood faithfully by my side, who

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have striven with me for the good of our beloved Fatherland. May God and the Blessed Virgin, patroness of our country, refuge of the afflicted, reward you. I myself will never forget.

“That love for my country and my people which has ever been the guide to all my acts, which has even made easy the last great sacrifice can never, through any circumstance nor any event, be lessened. My thoughts, my prayers will ever be for my beloved home.

“To my thanks I add a last wish — that all who were once my faithful subjects will, from this day on, show to their new ruler, my sister, the same fidelity, the same self-sacrifice as to me. With entire confidence I have placed in her hands the destinies of my country. In your loyalty to her I shall find my greatest earthly joy.

“My last fervent recommendation to all is: ‘Hold aloft the good traditions of our fathers, remain for ever faithful children of Holy Church, continue to be true, free Luxemburgers!’

“MARIE ADELAIDE.”

As these words were finished, a dawn, wintry, sunless as the destiny of her whose farewell they embodied was breaking over Luxemburg. Heavy fog shrouded the turrets and towers of Castle Berg. At seven o'clock they all went silently out through the chill, dripping park to Mass, each heart full of its own especial supplications, of its own fears and hopes.

During breakfast Marie Adelaide sat between her

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mother and Charlotte. Though pale she was smiling, and it was on her smile and by her strength that they were borne through the anguish of those last hours. Long afterwards her mother said that she whispered in answer to a remonstrance that she was not drinking her coffee, 'I am the cup that thirsteth for the wine,' adding, 'It is well with me,' as she saw her mother's sudden tears.

There was a special tenderness in her every look at that sister on whose head the crown so newly shone. 'Lotty, I leave Luxemburg in thy hands,' she said at the end. 'It is enough for me to know that thou wilt do thy best.' Then, 'Poor Lotty,' and one of her rare embraces.

Her hand was kissed mutely by friends and servitors. What, after all, was there to say? The sacrifice was consummated; new things awaited both her who went and those who stayed.

She drove to the border town of Diedenhofen with her mother and three of her sisters. No sounds nor ceremonies of any kind marked the farewell to her country of that princely being at whose birth not many years since the land had echoed with cannon-shots of rejoicing.

She acknowledged somewhat aloofly the salute of the three French officers of lesser rank who had been sent to safeguard her departure from the little town, and to accompany her to the Swiss frontier, speaking a few words to each according to his seniority, with an unflagging smile, with an impenetrable reserve, that betrayed nothing of her anxiety at leaving her country under foreign control nor of her own impending exile,

symbolized unpoetically by that waiting train with its puffing engine. Her natural habit of speaking only the necessary word stood her in good stead. It was impossible even at that hour for those who loved her to divine what was going on in that complicated, hidden nature, destined — viewed in the light of its end — to present a perfect picture of mortal frustration.

A last shrill whistle of the train-conductor, a last quick touch of her sisters, a last embrace of her mother whose hand she once again kissed, bending very low over it. . . . That slender black-robed figure, with pale face and dry eyes that gave a single backward glance, then got into the compartment reserved for her, where the Countess Anna, who had taken an early train from Colmar-Berg, and her Hof Marschal, Baron Ritter von Gruensteyn, who was to accompany her as far as Strasburg, were awaiting her. Two maids in a second class carriage had charge of their luggage — other retinue there was none.

‘The ex-Grand Duchess greeted me and Ritter distantly,’ writes Countess Anna. ‘She was deathly pale and immediately begged to be left alone. After what seemed to me an eternity she opened the door of the compartment and called to me. I had been sitting as if I were a piece of lead on the nearest little seat in the corridor. There were traces of tears on her face. She gave me a strange, indecipherable look, then placed a finger at her lips. The curtain of her habitual reserve, raised for a moment in the stress of farewell, had slowly but surely fallen. Neither then nor afterwards did she ever say anything that revealed the thoughts and feelings of that first hour

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in which she found herself on foreign soil, not even to me. I have always felt that expressed and shared they might have been less costly to her nerves and flesh. But it wouldn't have been her way. She went out of Luxemburg alone as she would go out of life.

'We stopped first at Strasburg. She kept humming under her breath that evening —

*"O Strassburg, O Strassburg, du wunderschöner Stadt,
In deinem Schoss begraben liegt so manischer Soldat."*

But she talked of indifferent things, that veil of her reserve stirred only indicatively by the ancient refrain. It was the first burial place of her old life. I think she felt herself only a fallen soldier "buried in its lap".

They spent one night in that city of dead soldiers.

'The rooms were bare,' continues the Countess Anna, 'the beds icy. We went out to Mass in penetrating wind and rain. After breakfast Ritter took his leave. He was a dry, cold man, not much given to expressing emotion, but something hot and painful seemed to be squeezed and oozing out of him as he stood before his late sovereign. She was both proud and humble.

'I thank you for your services to me and to my parents. Serve now my sister.'

'At Basle she was for a last time entirely Nassau and Braganza, as she bade farewell without a smile to the French officers. . . .'

They went directly to Montreux, descending at the Palace Hotel, so closely overhanging the storied beauty of Lake Lemman. Looking out upon it the next morning Marie Adelaide found it in the full love-

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liness of its pearly winter tints. A white sun lay softly upon it. Little, brown, tall, two-sailed fisher boats dotted it. Wide-winged gulls flew above it. The Jura range beyond lifted itself glisteningly against the pale and cloudless sky.

She was one more to take her place among the many exiled great of the earth who have looked out over that same lovely expanse, voicelessly or with outcry — according to temperament and destiny. The 'terrible' mountains, mist-wreathed or shining, return their gaze, unansweringly; the lake is silent to their entreaties.

The stuff of exile is of strange hue and texture, diverse as the beings who must wear it. Dipped in the dyes of memory and nostalgia it gives off a subtle poison.

Marie Adelaide was naturally the cynosure of all eyes. Her fate lay too newly upon her. Despite her simple raiment, her modest even deprecatory demeanour — head somewhat forward-bending, eyes cast down — her royal youth, her beauty, her so late despoilment made her a natural subject of conversation among the motley groups of war-uprooted beings blown from the four winds of Europe to the shining, silent lake. Totally unused to hotel life Marie Adelaide suffered excessively from the loss of her accustomed privacy. The glances and whisperings of those beings with whose calamities, hopes and despairs her own were unrelated, became unbearable. The very beauty of the lake, the too-near, water-reflected castle of Chillon increased her melancholy. In early March they fled from the Palace Hotel going

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down the lake to Villeneuve, living for two months at the more retired Hotel Byron. They found there the charming Princess Miguel Braganza, *née* Rhinelanders Stewart, with her children; her husband, of German war-allegiance, being the cousin of the Grand Duchess on her mother's side.

There, too, with her children was Countess Laszlo Széchényi, *née* Vanderbilt, whose soul in every sense was apart from hatreds, *au dessus de la mêlée*. The splendour of her vast and tireless charity was equalled alone by the completeness of her encloaking modesty.

The exact *état d'âme* of Marie Adelaide during her sojourn on the lake of Geneva is difficult of analysis. There seems to have been something inchoate and elusive about it, with an entire lack of reaction to the complete and sudden change in her existence. She had begun to strike the descending scale of consideration. Her head that had worn a crown was coldly bared to life. She was in haste to cover it with the black veil of that great mother, Saint Theresa of Avila. The question continually in her mind was of when and how and where. Yet at the same time her thoughts travelled nostalgically, even neurasthenically, towards Luxemburg; towards its pinnacles of grey and red rust, its crested crags bearing their memorials of ancient invasions, towards its dark forests and its bright rivers, towards Berg, the castle of her youth, towards the fields and vineyards of its *bon pays*; even towards the flames and smoke of the great blast furnaces of its 'Black Country.'

'She would come into my room early in the morning,' the Countess Anna said, 'and I could see some-

thing spent and burnt-up in her expression as she pulled back the curtains and let in that white glare from the lake. A word, a gesture, would indicate an almost sick longing for her mother, for her sisters, for that lost "at-homeness" that she could feel only with them, only in Luxemburg. But in her complicated nature her destiny and her aspirations were to be for ever at war. I felt that within was now a cruel double wish — for her lost place and for further renunciation. Poor Maus.'

Early in May they went from Villeneuve to Spiez on the lake of Thun where they took a small house, Châlet des Sapins, that Marie Adelaide might be rid of hotel life increasingly distasteful to her. There she could come and go entirely unobserved. In the little nearby chapel an old priest said Mass to which the Grand Duchess and the Countess Anna made the responses on alternate days. They performed all the small duties of sacristan, sweeping out the chapel, dusting the benches, washing, ironing and mending the linen. They kept the altar garnished with flowers gathered on long walks through the valley or up the mountain sides — masses of blue *Himmelsherold*, rust-red alpen-rosen, gentian, campanulas, mountain lilies, white and yellow ox-eyes, pink lime-wort — all that infinite richness of Alpine flora. Arriving when the fields were in their matchless early splendour, Marie Adelaide followed their full blooming, losing herself again in that love of the earth and all it bears, intrinsic function of her being. 'First the buds and the flowers, then the leaves, then the small fruits forming and swelling.' She forbore ever to pick anything that

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in time would bear fruit for human nourishment, 'never wishing to interrupt the outflow of nature to man.' She would lie for hours upon the moss seeking out its minute perfections of form, texture, groupings. Butterflies, golden and green dragon flies and great tawny bees floated and buzzed over her — all that world of tiny creatures whose habits and uses she knew so well.

Shortly after their arrival they had been joined by Maria Antonia of Bourbon Parma, young and lovely sister of the Grand Duchess Charlotte's fiancé. This princess, to whom all human joys seemed to beckon, went soon afterwards into the Benedictine order in the abbey of Sainte Cécile at Solesmes, which through the ages has received so many of royal race.

They all made a retreat at the convent of the Holy Cross at Ingebohl near Lucerne, given by a Bavarian Franciscan monk, who enjoined on Marie Adelaide various exercises of piety before then unpractised by her. There she first made the 'Culpa,' which entailed the confession of three sins or grievous faults aloud in the chapel and various other acts of penitential piety, lending herself with a curious avidity to obedience.

Later they made the pilgrimage to Einsiedeln, lying high above the melancholy and monotonous lake of Zurich. There is an ancient road leading up to it by the little Etzel Pass, over which have passed countless supplicating thousands, footsore, hungry, cold.

It has not changed since Goethe's day. He 'followed a number of pilgrims who while seeming to invite us to share their holy purpose lent a picturesque and

characteristic animation to the solitary heights. We saw the winding path by which we had to travel marked out by a stream of living beings and found encouragement in the sight. For the customs of the Romish Church are in every way significant and impressive to the Protestant, inasmuch as he recognizes what is primal and profound in them to which they owe their existence, and what is human in them to which they owe their transmission from generation to generation. . . . We now saw, rising in a dreary, treeless vale, the splendid church and monastery surrounded by a neat looking colony, within whose wide and stately precincts was suitable accommodation for a large and varied assemblage of guests.

‘The little church within the church, the former hermitage of the saint, encrusted with marble and transformed as far as possible into a regular chapel was new to me . . . It could not but excite serious thoughts as to how a single spark of goodness and of the fear of God had here kindled a bright and ever-burning flame, to which bands of believers would make toilsome pilgrimages to light their little tapers at its holy fire . . . It points to a boundless craving in man for the same light, the same warmth which this old hermit cherished and enjoyed in profoundest feeling and most confident conviction.’*

Thus wrote Goethe thirty-five years after his visit. Marie Adelaide nearly a century and a half later went, too, to ‘light her little taper at its holy fire.’

Now a narrow railroad twists up from the lake to the ancient town, through pine forests and steep green

* *Poetry and Truth* (1775). Part IV, Book XVIII.

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meadows, over brawling, trestle-bridged streams. This they took, though Marie Adelaide, in spite of a terrific thunderstorm crashing about the mountain tops and inundating the valley, begged to go as 'holy ones had gone.'

They lodged at the old Hotel zum Pfauen thick-walled, irregular-staired, many-windowed, porcelain-stoved, terraced, comfortable.

Opposite is the great baroque Cathedral. The interior, a breath-taking mass of delicate gilding, pale, lacy cornicing on high flung vaulting, exemplifies supremely the splendour and grace of its epoch. Despite the sack of the Abbey by the French in 1798 the library contains a vast assortment of old manuscripts, and in the treasury still remain many precious objects hidden away at the time. The so-called 'Black Virgin,' a carved wooden image of dateless origin, is in the 'little church within the church.'

After early Mass they would come back for their breakfast of coffee, rolls and honey in the ancient, light-flooded dining room of the Pfauen or out on its little terrace. They walked about the high windswept plateau, sat in the sun-baked, sheltered graveyard, talking of little things dear to loving hearts. Four o'clock found them again at the Cathedral for vespers, sung in that perfection of plain-chant for which the sons of Saint Benedict are so famous.

The Abbots of Einsiedeln have always enjoyed great consideration. In the thirteenth century the reigning abbot was made Prince of the Holy Roman Empire, but it is the fame of St. Meinrad, murdered by robbers in 861 near the site of the present abbey, which has

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made the glory of Einsiedeln. Once under the protection of the Counts of Rapperswyl, it fell under the rule of a cadet branch of the house of Hapsburg. Since the fourteenth century it has lain in the Swiss canton of Schwyz. The cell of the holy Meinrad was rebuilt in the tenth century by the hermit Benno from which time it became a place of pilgrimage. . . .

At the Villa des Sapins Marie Adelaide drew about her inevitably a little circle, and thus did not yet feel the chill of those creeping shadows of her *Vita Umbra-tilis* (life in the shade), nor the iron of exile.

From Munich came the charming wife of the Duke Karl Theodor of Bavaria, from Freiburg Professor Kirsch, learned in the natural sciences so dear to her. The Prince Consort of Holland visited her, too, and many others drawn by sympathy for her strange fate, by affectionate relationship, by admiration for her composure, by awe at the coming renunciation of all that for which she had apparently been destined by her birth and beauty.

It was here that the Emperor Karl arranged for the marriage by proxy of the Grand Duchess Charlotte with Felix, brother of his consort Zita.

This episode has been little commented on. It is interesting as showing the varied and infertile activities of the Emperor that summer after the Armistice, rather than anything in the life of Marie Adelaide, who, in her anxiety for her sister's happiness, for heirs to the throne of Luxemburg, simply lent herself to the situation. Marriage by proxy was no new nor strange thing in the history of the Duchy, and that journey in the dead of night to Wartegg on the Lake of

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Constance with the young Emperor who came in his motor to take her to two of her aunts awaiting her there, one the mother of the bridegroom, was but a modern variant. It was, too, one of Karl's last trips — Karl, that *guter Bursch*, martyr of his good intentions, of his limitations and of overwhelming events. Misfortune is the sole school in which rulers (whether anointed or elected) learn, but the lessons come mostly too late to serve other than to their own disciplining, for rarely is the same man king a second time.

Late in the summer came Marie Adelaide's sister Antonia whose engagement to the Crown Prince of Bavaria had been broken off. The fourth of the six sisters, she possessed, besides beauty, intellectual and musical gifts of no mean order. Prince Rupprecht, thirty years older but a *charmeur*, had fallen desperately and at first sight in love with her on their meeting at Wildbad at the villa of Duke Karl Theodor. This is the quite simple explanation of a political plot on the part of Marie Adelaide in favour of Germany, of the fall of a ministry in Luxemburg. Prince Rupprecht had released the Princess from their engagement on the ground of his war-shattered fortunes. Also she was too French for the Germans, too German for the French, and her personal destiny was for a while at the mercy of the political hatreds of Europe.*

* The ex-Crown Prince's son, Albrecht, by his first wife Marie-Gabrielle, Duchess in Bavaria, who died in her early thirties, is, in case of a restoration, heir to the Bavarian throne. The mother of Prince Rupprecht's first wife was also mother of the Queen of the Belgians, making his heir this latter's nephew. The relationships in reality so near, were stretched by the war as far apart as the poles. The marriage of Prince Rupprecht to the Princess Antonia finally took place at Hohenburg, April 7, 1921.

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It is again the pages of that prayer book which indicate fragmentarily but insistently the fugue of Marie Adelaide's interior life at that period, her *Heisshunger* (hot hunger) for God, whom she began to call with engaging candour, with a smile and a mantling of colour in her cheeks, 'sweet friend of the soul.' Copied out in her fine, round handwriting are the verses:

*'Komm, O geist der Heiligkeit
Aus des Himmels Herrlichkeit,
Sende deines Lichtes Strahl!
Komm, süsser Seelenfreund'
Wasche was beflechet ist,
Heile was verwundet ist
Heiliger Geist wir bitten Dich
Gieb uns allen gnädiglich
Deiner sieben Gaben Kraft
Gieb Verdienst in dieser Zeit
Und dereinst die Seeligkeit
Nach vollbrachter Wanderschaft.'*

'Wir wollen nicht fragen was Uns trauerig macht, Angst und Sorge, Sehnsucht und Kummer verursacht, sondern Dich nur wollen wir nach Deinen Wünschen fragen ob Du Opfer brauchest für Deine Zwecke hier auf Erden.' — Spiez 10. v. 19.

On a crumpled, smoothed-out piece of paper, as if it had been worn on her body, are the august and terrifying words heavily underscored: *Time Jesum transeuntem et non revertentem* (Fear the passage of

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Jesus for He does not return), which really means not to let mystical intuitions escape, for they may not come again.

They remained late at Spiez. The colours of mountain side and valley that they had known in their spring delicacy had deepened. Everywhere were vivid yellow crocuses, dark lavender nightshade, orange and brown mushrooms on their thick, damp satiny stems, pear and apple trees bending under the weight of their fruit, purpling vineyards, aureolin pastures with their herds of cattle and goats, crimson cherry trees, golden nut trees — all that gilded, aromatic magnificence of the shortening days.

She had always peculiarly loved the final harvest season, the autumnal moment when the last fruits have been gathered in, the last flowers fallen to seed to lie darkly, mysteriously hidden in the winter earth, as she herself desired to lie mysteriously with Christ, to bring forth that deathless fruit of the soul.

CHAPTER II

THE ETERNAL CITY 1919-20

*'O Rome, my country, City of the Soul,
The orphans of the heart must turn to thee'*

INEVITABLY the second exterior step of Marie Adelaide's pilgrimage was to Italy, 'paradise of exiles.'

On October 29th, accompanied by her sister Antonia and the Countess Anna, the ex-Grand Duchess might have been seen, black-gowned, small-hatted, slim, graceful, climbing into a second class compartment of the train placarded 'Milano,' waiting in the great white-tiled station at Berne . . . Passing finally through the majestic valley of the Rhone they pierced at Brigue the noisy darkness of the tunnel—separating two worlds, issuing at Domodossola to slip down those sun-bleached, sun-dried yet colour-washed slopes into the gold lying upon the autumnal Latin earth. Then that shining world fell into shadow, into darkness, as they rushed across the Lombardy plain.

'There had been all day a sort of radiance on Marie Adelaide's face as of one who is turned at last towards a bright and long-desired end,' writes Countess Anna, 'but now we saw in the single, high, staring light of the compartment that it had grown pale to opaqueness, as if mind and soul were withdrawn, curtained, and she seemed separated from us in some

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secrecy of her will and desire, with which we had nothing to do. She sat for the most part leaning, motionless, her eyes heavy-lidded, closed, her hat in her lap, against that damp, dark window, in that crowded compartment, the floor littered with the scraps and leavings of the day and the occupants at last talking noisily with the rest of us, offering crumpled newspapers and oranges, opening or shutting their awful, crammed, disorderly valises.

'At Milan we bought some sandwiches and wine and hired three of those little, hard, lumpy, white-covered pillows, then changed into another second class compartment of the Roman train, arranging ourselves as well as possible to sit up all night. The corners were of course already occupied.

'It's hard on you,' she whispered, 'but I should really be doing it on foot.' She was wedged between a fat man who promptly took off his collar, and a woman who untied some unsavoury shoes. She was as far removed from it all as some star. I kept looking across at her; as so often she seemed to me wrapped visibly in a destiny not to be denied.'

They lodged first in some small, entirely unprincely rooms on the top floor of the Hotel de Russie, pleasing to Marie Adelaide because of its garden pressed against the bastions of the Pincian Hill. 'That dark cypress married to that pale willow, those cedars of Lebanon, those sharp-leaved oleanders hiding their soft summer glory, even the palms, though that something unsecret, unevocative, dustily banal of the palm received no expression of admiration from her. It is the city of cypress, plane, ilex and pine.'

MARIE ADELAIDE

She lived completely incognita. No one cared, no one asked who was that slender, black-robed, large-eyed, smiling young woman with the Botticelli mouth and neck.

The hotel was in its thickest post-war disorder, but it had an easy access to the roof, whence the City spreads out widely. Close beneath is the warmly-tinted Piazza del Popolo, with its obelisk flanked by those four, water-spouting lionesses; its four church-tops wedged between the far-off blue of Monte Mario and the immortal dome of Michael Angelo; its ancient, sun-baked gate which has so often arched itself over saints and sinners, over princes and paupers, over armies of conquest coming down from the North.

In that November of red sunsets let us follow Marie Adelaide and her companions on one of their familiar late afternoon walks when they would step into the Piazza and turning sharply, ascend the steep little byway, ilex-shadowed, to the Pincian Hill. There they would find themselves suddenly, releasingly looking out from the great parapet, over the Eternal City, blood-red, kept, it seemed, from spilling into the sea only by the high brim of the Janiculum; a line of paler light fringing St. Peter's dome, the great Vatican mass gone black, Monte Mario passing insubstantially into night.

'This is my city, too,' she once said, 'the city of my soul, but I have another,' revealing shyly that homesickness for the land of her birth, for its pale lemon, lavender and silver sunsets fading slowly over dim northern landscapes into long northern nights — for all that was in her Nassau heritage.

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She would walk, as thousands have walked, past the Villa Medici, stopping for a moment by the great, flat fountain, its water fire-red, blackly-patterned by the low-hanging ilex trees . . . Trinità dei Monti where she always paused by the obelisk to look again out over the deeply-embossed cup of the city, already overflowing with the colours of the quickly-falling Roman night. A medley of human sounds. The clanging of trams, the tooting of motor car horns below in the Piazza di Spagna — noisy crowds freed from business or pleasure hurrying home. Swifts circling black against the sky; blind beggars, beautiful shivering children leading them, to whom she always gave alms; hobbling cripples. They would ascend the convent steps for Benediction, those warm-dyed, time-softened steps plaqued with the names of Louis XVIII and Pius VII and the date MDCCCXVI.

On coming out again they would stand by the obelisk looking over the city, its form and substance gone black, lacy lights thickly patterning it. Slowly they would descend the broad steps, stopping often to buy a last flower from an insistent vendor as they dipped into the noise and hurry of the Piazza, then proceeding along the narrow Via Babuino with its dimly-lighted antiquity shops . . . Rome, the city of the soul, 'an indescribable melody in the air and the smell of centuries.'

'She began,' says Countess Anna, 'to go out into the streets alone for the first time. Something pent up in her nature was released by this new liberty, used though it was for the simplest things, mostly of piety. We pinned a large map of Rome to her

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bedroom wall, and our usual occupation would be to start out in the morning on separate paths to discover new churches. Among the four hundred or so of the Eternal City this was not difficult. On our return we would compare notes, marking the churches we had visited with crosses, looking up the life of this or the other saint whose name they bore. She was not unhappy.

‘That day of the sixth of November whose sun sank on the nuptials of her sister Charlotte, she passed in what seemed a sort of sad, shy content, with thankfulness, with relief when it was over . . . She had been to Mass at Sant’ Andrea delle Fratte. There quietly, hiddenly, she must have thought of secret things — Lotty, lovely sister, lovely bride — Lotty to whom she had given a crown.

‘When she came out she repeated the words of the old hymn: *Wie unsre Väter flechten*. There was a sort of suppressed agitation on her face. We felt that had she been alone she would have wept.’

It was in the late autumn that Marie Adelaide had her first audience with Benedict XV. She was a charming figure as recalled by one of the Noble Guard on duty the day of her audience. She wore her perfectly simple high black dress, her long lace veil with a certain shy, royal elegance; her face was sweet and smiling, her eyes shining as one who enters her father’s house certain of welcome. She was received first with her sister and the Countess Anna; then they withdrew. Like all the acts of her *Vita Umbratilis*, her life in the shade, there is but an

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inferential record of what followed. When she came out there was light on her face as of one who has given thanks. 'He will help me,' she said — and neither of her companions asked in what way or when.*

It was, however, on his advice that she chose the convent of the Discalced Carmelites in Modena whose superior was especially adept in the complex matter of forming souls to the religious life, Benedict XV quickly realizing that the circumstances and temperament of the former Grand Duchess would require the most delicate handling. He was later to say to a well-known Luxemburger: 'Your Grand Duchess Marie Adelaide is a sanctified being, who by her prayers and her sacrifice seems to have been as it were the lightning rod which turned from the House of Luxemburg the great storm that menaced it, allowing it to remain firmly on its own foundations'.

After several weeks they moved regretfully to the Hotel Quirinale where they could live more reasonably. Money was short in Luxemburg as elsewhere. There was little for a wandering ex-Grand Duchess.

* Ten years afterwards, January 9th, 1930, the Grand Duchess Charlotte, who was in Rome for the nuptials of the Prince of Piedmont and Maria José of Belgium, was received with her consort by Pius XI in the Sala del Tronetto with the dignities due to a reigning sovereign. She gleamed with jewels, and her black veil was held in place by the high diadem that had once crowned so beautifully her sister's gold-brown hair. As a gift the Grand Duchess offered to His Holiness the sixty-five volumes of the history of Luxemburg, bound in blue leather, stamped with the Papal arms. In return she received the golden Jubilee medal. She then according to the Protocol took her royal way to the Cardinal Secretary of State Gasparri, after which she was received in the Basilica by Cardinal Merry del Val, archpriest of saintly memory.

The day before the ex-Crown Prince Rupprecht of Bavaria, accompanied by the Princess Antonia, his throneless heir and their suites, had been received, though in lesser protocolary state. The loveliness of the Princess, too, was jewelled and diademed.

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The finances of the royal family administered since the days of Adolf from Bieberich (Wiesbaden) were on the basis of the mark. Now with the daily, hourly, inflation its buying power was practically *nil*. The time came when an Italian postage stamp was an affair of tens of thousands, and the price of a single tramway ticket would formerly have kept the royal stables for a year.

Though accustomed to the simple, orderly plenty of life in her Duchy, Marie Adelaide, really only occupied with the most personal question in life — the salvation of her soul — seemed scarcely to feel the limitations of her situation. She bought nothing, ate the simplest food, climbed into tramways, waiting patiently with her number in her hand, never thinking of taking a taxi nor even a crawling, jolting but not unpleasant *carrozza*.

Her wardrobe, of the simplest to begin with, grew shabby; only an exquisite neatness, inherent part of her personality, redeemed and brightened its penury. Her shoes were resoled, patched, her little flat hat, her plain tailor suit brushed vigorously of the Roman dust, her umbrella mended. Paradoxical but typical of certain long persistent customs, abstemious as they all were in their personal habits, they still kept their maids. It simply didn't occur to them to be without *Bedienung* (service). And if it had, how dismiss faithful servants into that hard, post-war world?

Christmas of 1919 passed quietly. Marie Adelaide's sister Antonia was still with her, Hilda joined them. On Christmas eve Prince Miguel of Braganza, delightful and accomplished grand seigneur, who had

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a way of making *la pluie et le beau temps* wherever he appeared (himself lodged in one of the smart hotels), came bringing gifts to his lovely cousins. He had sometime before renounced for himself and his descendants any eventual succession to the throne of Portugal. His mortal sands were slipping even faster than those of Marie Adelaide. A little more than three years and he was to lie, unforgettably beautiful, on his alien, flower-embowered death-bed.* His long-fingered, white hand pressed a crucifix against his breast. On his marble face, with classic brow, arched nose and deeply sunken eyes lay one of those strange, pale-lipped smiles of the unexpectedly-called, the early-departed. . . .

During those months of their stay at the Hotel Quirinale, Marie Adelaide went daily to the nearby church of Santa Maria degli Angeli, passing through the noise and hurry of the Via Nazionale, crossing by the great fountain of the Piazza del Esedra to step into its sudden quiet. She always paused before the statue of St. Bruno whose withdrawn look was in accord with the habitual watch that she herself put on any expression of thought and feeling. In what moment of inspiration, never to be attained by him again, did the young Houdon, at twenty, fashion that mighty statue of the great Carthusian? The auspicious, secret smile on the face reaches out like light through the vast emptiness of the church.

She went often to Santa Maria Maggiore where she would kneel long at the altar of the Holy Crib, drawn by the mystery of the Nativity. To the end she

* February 21st, 1923 (701 Park Avenue, New York City).

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retained a touching interest in all that concerned children. Doubtless, too, she thought of Lotty under whose heart as spring came lay the dynastic hope of Luxemburg.

Among her books that winter were *Le Livre de la Route*, *Mosaïques Romaines*, *La Vie de Saint François d'Assise*, by Johannes Jörgensen. That agnostic, northern soul transplanted resistingly but propitiously into the soil of Italy and the record of its slow flowering in the Latin Church fascinated her. The urgent, searching, seeking, finding book *Die Unruhe zu Gott*, by his Dutch friend, Jan Verkade, later painter-monk in the Benedictine foundation at Beuron, was long on her night-table.

She had followed, too, the story of the conversion of another friend of Jörgensen, the rich, brilliant, art-loving, young Danish Jew, Mogens Ballin, of whom it is said that he taught a whole generation of Radical-minded Danes the possibility of the Roman Church as an intellectual as well as spiritual force.

Still another consoling book was *l'Homme* by Ernest Hello, unread save by the few. With that something flame-like, ardent, that was always in her voice when spiritual issues were in question she would read aloud favourite passages: '*Le propre de l'erreur, c'est de n'avoir qu'un moment à elle; comme le propre de la vérité, c'est d'avoir devant soi l'éternité. Aussi, l'une est patiente, l'autre est pressée.*' (The characteristic of error is to possess but a moment; as the characteristic of truth is to have before it eternity. The one is patient, the other very hurried.) And in memory of her love of the natural world: '*La science est chargée de découvrir à*

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quel point les mondes sont imbibés de la miséricorde divine. (It is incumbent on science to discover to what degree the universe is saturated with Divine Mercy.) And again, seeking strength for her own choice: *'Entre les hideuses et ridicules ténèbres de la nuit qui fuit et les divines splendeurs du jour qui veut paraître, choisissons. Il est difficile que vous n'ayez pas eu dans votre vie une heure d'amour pour la vérité. Au nom de cette heure-là, choisissez.'** (Between the hideous, mocking shadows of the night that passes and the divine splendours of the eternal day which asks but to break, let us choose. It is almost impossible that in all your life you have not had one hour of love for truth. In its name choose.)

As that chill, blue-skied winter wore on they fell into the habit of spending the mornings on the Palatine Hill, and when that 'spirit of the place,' Boni,† found out who the tall, star-eyed young woman was who always had a few grasses in her hand or was bending to watch an insect cross a sunny path, he presented himself. After that those two so differently elect beings would sometimes wander in the sun-baked, aromatic sweetness of the Farnese Gardens or sit, light-drenched, in that which he himself had planted

* Lasserre's preface, 1872, says of Hello: *'Oui, c'était un homme. Sa tête étrange et fulgurante, sa tête au cheveux légèrement épars était illuminée par deux yeux qu'on ne peut pas oublier. Ils étaient tout remplis de cette flamme semi-douce et terrible, de cette lumière supérieure que les hommes ont appelée le Génie. Le front était vaste comme la pensée. Le dos, légèrement vouté comme celui d'Atlas, semblait courbé sous le poids de quelque invisible Univers . . . Comprendre, c'est égaler' est un mot de Raphaël qu'il s'est plu à citer . . . Il y a dans Hello des hauteurs que je ne puis mesurer et des profondeurs sur le bord desquelles le vertige me saisit.'*

† Giacomo Boni, who lies since 1925, unforgotten, unforgettable, in that garden of his planting.

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so eloquently with those flowers, vines and shrubs of Pliny's recounting — roses (the tiny, many-leaved *mille feuilles* and moss-rose, true ancestors he reminded her, of the gaudier, oft-crossed varieties of her Duchy) — lilies, pinks, larkspur, geranium, jasmine, ivy, myrtle, laurel, laburnum, whitethorn.

She, her love of the natural world in visible inhalation, exhalation, colour in her cheeks, light in her eyes, would listen with that peculiar hang of the head on a long neck seen often in those bearing within themselves the mysterious deposit of sanctity, like that of San Bernardino in the Palazzo Palmieri-Nuti at Siena . . . He with his 'gentle yet austere visage, with that kindling of the pale grey of his skin, like certain Procurators of Tintoretto; thick hair falling over that forehead charged with wisdom and with divination.'*

With his very blue eyes, introspective yet scrutinizing, and those waving gestures he often pointed out the flight of birds, explaining their portents and ancient auspices. Once he said, aware of something delitescent about her, and all his words are significant, dense with poetry and percipience, that she seemed already in a sense *una creatura partita di questo secolo* (a being gone from this world).

She would descend with that noble, undulating gait the gentle declivity of the Summa Via Sacra stopping to pick a bit of marble or a wild flower pushing up between its imperishable stones, to be lost

* *Lo rivedo con quel suo viso dolce eppure accigliato, con quel colorito acceso tra il pelo grigio, come certi Procuratori del Tintoretto. Rivedo quel suo ciuffo selvatico di capelli su la fronte carica di sapienza e di divinazione.*
d'Annunzio: *Notturmo*.

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finally within the ancient, mosaicked church of Saints Cosma and Damiano, those strange Arabian physicians come from so far to fulfil their destiny as martyrs.

It was from the Palatine that she watched the breaking of the Latin spring. Briefly, briefly Rome is a 'rose-red city,' an ancient pink world in renewal. Everywhere a rosy swelling of the trees before the iridescence of the green — rose-red under a white-blue sky. Here and there, the pale, feathery yellow of the coldly-burning mimosa, the wan emerald of early grasses, the dark, glittering leaves of magnolia and ilex, but the rest is rose. She tasted to the full the sweet vernal immanence. '*Verweile Augenblick,*' Boni once said to her to receive in return that veiled yet understanding look.

But there is no staying of the moment. Quickly the green breaks, the colours burst, the rose departs — is lost. The pale, fatidic spectrum of the gardens of Rome's Seven Hills brightens into its seven colours, the blue of the heavens deepens over shrines of martyr and saint, over memorials of man's magnificence.

They went often out under the arch of Drusus to the little whitewashed, weather-stained church of *Domine quo vadis?* She adored holy legends. 'If they are not true they might have been, and anyway they testify to the mystical longings of the heart,' she would answer to historical-minded ones.

No one who goes to Rome but knows that spot, out through the Porta San Sebastiano, out under the arched memorials of victors. About the church where the

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roads divide, to the right the Via Ardeatina, to the left the Caffarella a little centre of life has formed itself, characteristically Roman, familiar yet evocative. The Via Appia, with its taciturn and melancholy tombs, overgrown with ivy, cypress-pointed, is felt rather than seen, though only a little farther on are the crumbling sepulchres of Geta and Priscilla. Then those swarms of beautiful children who on every outskirts of Rome give testimony to the vast life-urge of the nation — the continual *Nova et Vetera* of all Italian scenes. Nearly opposite the church is a *trattoria*. Mostly only those gaudy red and blue and yellow wine-carts stop before it, their drivers awake from sleep, descend thirstily. There are clothless tables set near dusty bamboos and bare dry trees, crude blue and red signs — ‘*olio*,’ ‘*vino*,’ ‘*paste*,’ ‘*benzina*.’ It was here that Marie Adelaide on several occasions insisted on making a frugal evening meal of bread and wine.

‘She never wiped her more than dubious plate and knife like the rest of us,’ said Countess Anna, ‘and she suffered smilingly the siege by deserving and undeserving beggars, blind, halt, dull-witted, caught up as she was in the flux of an immense compassion. The beautiful half-clad children would bring the tenderest look to her face. The dust of tourist motors would whiten her clothes. She didn’t seem to notice. I think she lived mostly in a dream, but a happy dream.’

‘The expression on her face on coming that first time out of the catacombs of San Sebastian was of awe, envy, humility. “I hope that I also would have

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chosen to die," she whispered as she extinguished her little taper . . . Then "Strangers and pilgrims all," as we took our somewhat long way back to the city, on foot, adding, "I can only associate myself with the saints by fatigue."'

It will be seen from all this how continuously subjective Marie Adelaide's *état d'âme* was, and how far removed the social and political life of Rome from her wish or circumstance.

But it was of these threads that the simply-patterned veil of her Swiss and Italian exile was woven. More and more she seemed lost to and from the world, indeed *una creatura partita di questo secolo*, while still in her slim flesh. Who could guess that within her being lay the seeds of the thorn tree from whose branches her second crown was to be woven? *L'âme humaine est très silencieuse.*

CHAPTER III

BETWEEN TWO KINGDOMS

'Seule la croix de Dieu est facile à porter'

AT last exercising the mysterious liberty of those souls who choose freely that which lies in their destiny, Marie Adelaide took her way to Modena, city of her great ancestress, Matilda of Tuscany. The journey north was marked by the first lovely latitudinal gradation of the colours of the Italian spring. What in Rome was bright, in Florence was pale, in Modena paler still.

The chosen and consenting soul filled by its own peculiar sweetness does not ask happiness as the 'children of the age' ask it; the joys and uses it seeks are those unknown or despised by them to whom all seems a great foolishness, in the end only 'a tale told by an idiot.'

When she passed through the ancient door of the Discalced Carmelites of the Via San Giovanni del Cantone it was seemingly to ask and find long asylum. She was but pausing on her way to early death.

'I waited outside in the Piazza,' the Countess Anna relates, 'for what seemed hours, occupying myself with taking snapshots. One of them shows Marie Adelaide just as she was coming out, waving her arm. But in spite of her smile and her welcoming gesture, I noticed something vaguely bewildered, chilled in

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her expression. To my question she answered simply: "She [the prioress] was very kind and will allow me to come to them in the autumn." Then she slipped her arm in mine, walking more closely to me than was her habit, as if seeking something known as well as dear. I have always thought that she had some vague prevision of the ultimate inapplicability of her choice to her destiny. Whatever it was it passed, and she was in an unwonted state of fluid happiness that evening as we sat in our hotel room, gaudy chromos of Victor Emmanuel on a horse and Garibaldi in a boat looking down upon us. Picking up her Book of Hours, it fell open at the office of the Apparition of St. Michael Archangel, and she read in that grave, warm voice of hers: "*Stetit Angelus juxta aram templi . . . Habens thuribulum auream in manu sua*,"* the sweetness of the "votive honey" seemed to fall from her lips . . . And again: "*Angeli, Archangeli, Throni et Dominationes, Principatus et Potestates, Virtutes coelorum, laudate Dominum de coelis*".†

'She pressed the book between her hands, her heavy eyelids lowered for a moment over her great blue eyes. Her whole face was of the pallor of some statue under that too heavy crown of hair.

'When she spoke again it was to marvel at the majestic sequence of those prayers‡ for all hours of

* 'An Angel stood at the altar of the temple, having a golden censer in his hand.'

† 'Angels, Archangels, Thrones and Dominations, Principalities and Powers, Virtues of heaven, praise ye the Lord from the heavens.'

‡ *Prime*, symbolizing infancy; *Tierce*, youth; *Sext*, maturity; *None*, the moment when the weight of the years begins to be felt; *Vespers*, the decline into old age, and *Compline*, recited at night-fall, signifying the inevitable hour of death.

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the day and night, designed to recall to man the shortness of earthly life, that she would soon be reciting with other consecrated women.

‘And then a slip of paper fell out of the black-bound book with its little silver clasp graven with the words *Virgo Potens*, and looking at it she read still with that “votive honey” in her voice:

“*Seule la croix de Dieu est facile à porter. La loi toute pure, la contrainte qu’exercent sur nous les conditions de la vie et la pression de la société humaine, cette contrainte est lourde et pénible, et de cela vient qu’un grand nombre d’hommes la brisent et rejettent leur fardeau de leurs épaules, les uns légèrement et d’autres en désespérés. Mais ce fardeau ne s’accommode pas d’être rejeté: fatalement il faut que nous le portions; et aussi bien la légèreté indifférente que le désespoir aboutissent à la même fin, qui est la mort. Il n’existe absolument qu’une seule issue; et c’est d’accepter la parole de Dieu, de prendre sur son épaule la croix de la vie, puisque telle est la volonté de Dieu en vue de notre bonheur à venir.*” *

Much has been written of saints and sainthood. The life of Marie Adelaide after leaving Luxemburg is the record of the hard, strange, cruel, sweet and beautiful ways in which they are fashioned and in what sainthood may consist. One hesitates to speak of it. ‘The children of the age’ are deaf to it. It is

* Johannes Jørgensen: *Livre de la Route*.

‘Alone the cross of God is easy to carry. The law of itself and the restrictions that the conditions of life and the pressure of human society impose upon us, are heavy and hard; and because this is so, a great number of men would break the law and throw their burden from their shoulders, some lightly, others in despair. But the burden of life is not to be thrown off. Fatally we must carry it and thoughtlessness as well as despair end in the same thing – death. There is but one way: to accept the word of God, to take upon our shoulders the cross of life, for that is the will of God in view of our happiness in the other world.’

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concerned chiefly, though obscurely, with the things of man's 'whole time' rather than with those of his mortality alone. It offers none of the visible prizes for which men and women struggle, and its processes are for the most part clarified only after the death of the body. An hourly, daily progressive matter concerning the interior life, the various outward occurrences that mark it often seem trivial, though, when examined, they will be found to have been definitely indicative of the end — the perfection of the soul. The instruments of this perfection are rarely those selected by the soul itself, for mostly man would throw his peculiar, chiseling grief away for one unknown — not *this* but another.

CHAPTER IV

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'He laid me aside like an arrow that He has chosen and kept me hidden in His quiver'

AFTER that first visit to the Modena convent Marie Adelaide, still in the company of the charming and faithful companion of her journeyings, returned to Hohenburg where her mother and four of her sisters were eagerly awaiting her. Charlotte was reigning in Luxemburg.

This period can be passed over quickly, filled as it was with the small occupations peculiar to loving families isolated by habit and circumstance, further set apart in that persistent frame of court etiquette, reduced though it was since the war. With the world of men and events Marie Adelaide was done; having no place in it she asked but to be forgotten of it. Her violet eyes drenched themselves more and more thirstily in the beauty of the natural world. Her Franciscan love of small animals increased to passion. She spent hours in that little hut of her childhood classifying her entomological collection, or she would follow the nostalgic notes of the cuckoo through pale spring forests, under those first tender shoots of beech and birch, those first blossomings of apple, pear and peach trees, returning with light on her face. Another spring and her hands, that now so eagerly drew out

the pallid, tightly-curved tufts of ferns or unfolded the secret clasp of virgin grasses would be hidden refrainingly under long monastic sleeves. . . .

But though her eyes were soft and tender testifying to some new fluidity of her being, her lips were silent and, save for an occasional ejaculation, she continued to be without the consolatory power of 'spilling her soul.' The Princess Hilda, the most pragmatic of beings, yet strangely subject to dreams and portents, was tormented by a recurrent dream of that beautiful sister entering with bowed head through a dark door, lost to the light of the natural world; only as the door was closing did she give a backward look. Her face was pale and bewildered. . . .

The date of Marie Adelaide's entry into the Carmelite order, not yet decided, hung like a half-seen star in cloud-patterned heavens. None of those who so tenderly loved her wished for her another fate. Was she not the dewy bride of Christ, *lilium inter spinas*, about to be transplanted into the well-watered garden? All things seemed to be working together for good. Her mother concealed her own anguish at the coming parting. Indeed toward the end when the grief of final separation was spinning its heavy threads in Marie Adelaide's heart she encouraged her with words concerning the peace, dignity and use of the life awaiting her. To the mother it seemed a happy solution of the future. Uncrowned ruler, she was superfluous in the world except to those who loved her.

A letter written as usual in English to the Countess Anna, who on their return to Hohenburg had gone

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immediately to visit her own mother, reflects the extreme simplicity of Marie Adelaide's life, but above all her complete inability to reveal anything of her *état d'âme*, complicated, suppressed, unsearchable. She had continued to call the Countess 'Baby' since that first Italian trip, perhaps because of an affectionate protectiveness which had sprung to full growth during the years of her reign.

'Hohenburg, 24. III. 20.

'Dear Baby,

'How are you? How was the journey? I do miss you — really. I wrote three letters to-day and am very proud of the feat, the last to Modena. . . .'

Of this letter which was to transform totally her life she only says:

'I asked the Rev. Mother to allow me to come at the beginning of October, as Mama is *einverstanden* (willing). . . .'

Of that vernal immanence to which she was so sensitive she writes baldly, unrevealingly:

'This morning I went to look at my little house with Hilda. Flowers are coming out again but it's cold and, oh, so wet and dirty on the way to Lenggries. . . . I'm reading *Madame Louise de France*.^{*} It has comforted and strengthened me. If she why not I?'

* Léon de la Brière.

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Here one feels, but vaguely, her soul in suspension as she makes the comparison—asks the question.

The rest of the letter is of an abysmal humility — handful of dust.

‘Don’t forget to pray for me because you know I want it badly, being so dreadfully *latschig* [a word of her own that she used to express slack or lazy]. I’m sure you imagine me much better than I am. Now good-bye, dear, dear Baby. I think so much of you and wish I hadn’t been so often so dreadfully nasty and cross. I beg your pardon with all my heart.

‘Please try to think only of the good times and not of the awful ones, although I know it’s difficult, but try — yes?’

‘With fondest love,

‘Your M. (Maus)’

Enclosed was a tiny picture after von Führich, *Der Gang Maria über das Gebirge* (The Flight of Mary over the Mountains), on which is written in English ‘In remembrance of the days in Spiez and Rome, but only the good ones.

‘From February, 1919, till March, 1920

‘A grateful and loving soul

‘Rome — Hohenburg.’

It will be of interest to recall briefly the story of Madame Louise de France, that youngest daughter of Louis XV, frail-bodied, iron-willed, loving-hearted, witty-minded princess. Her departure from the French Court to enter the Carmelite Order at St.

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Denis seemed to resemble in a measure Marie Adelaide's.

'Now on Wednesday in Holy Week, 1770, a carriage from Versailles drove into the outer court of the convent at 9 o'clock, the hour for Community Mass; from it alighted two ladies assisted by an equerry. One was Madame Louise de France, daughter of the King. . . . She wore a simple silk dress and a hood with a bow. Her "papers" permitting her entry into Carmel, which she chose because of its poverty and austerities, were simply the King's answer to her request:

"April 5th, 1770. I embrace you with all my heart, dearest daughter. I send you the Royal Order for your departure which you have asked of me. . . ."

From her first night at St. Denis the Princess slept on the floor. 'She is accustomed,' records the Superior of the Order, the Abbé Bertin who was also her confessor, 'to take those things she least likes at table, to do without a fire, to overcome her disgust at the smell of tallow candles. She recites the Divine Office every day. She makes use of hair-cloth, of the discipline, and beneath her court robes she wears a serge chemise. Everybody knows how the King loves his youngest daughter. He does not give her up without a wrench.' It is said of Louis XV that he 'loved his children with a bourgeois good humour rare in princes.' The thought of the King's spiritual state filled his daughter with a quite justified alarm. Concerning it she had no illusions. She had seen the Marquise de Pompadour presented to her mother, Marie Leczinska, of whom she was to say 'I have often wondered

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how the Queen while perfectly faithful to the duties of her great estate could free herself from her surroundings and live like a saint in the midst of the Court.' Madame Louise's entrance into Carmel, some time after her mother's death, took place within the year of the presentation at court of Madame du Barry. That the conversion of the King was one of the reasons for Madame Louise's entry into religion is touchingly attested to by her own words:

'Me, a Carmelite; the King, all God's, God can do it and God will do it.

'Oh, to be a Carmelite and leave all those I love on the road to heaven.

'When the King learns of my resolution can he consent to it without being drawn himself towards God and turning altogether to Him?'

At the news of her father's death, May 10th, 1774, in the odour of sanctity (and of smallpox) her cry was one of joy:

'O father, father, Heaven has heard my prayers! What happiness! . . . My joy is complete since the good God possesses my father's heart. . . .'

These last months before Marie Adelaide's entry into religion seem to have been the happiest, certainly the most peaceful, since her accession. Delivered from the responsibilities and preoccupations of public life, she was free to indulge that obsessional craving for privacy. Her sister Charlotte was to bear a child at the New Year. The dynasty was assured. Luxemburg was slowly recovering from the economic difficulties both of the war and of the peace. She was

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not leaving her mother alone; four of her sisters were still unmarried.

With the coming of September she spoke sometimes of that 'serene, contented harvest feeling.' All about her were peasant forms bending over the earth to take its fullness to their homes. Was she not about to garner her life into the spacious granary of Carmel?

There was not the slightest presage of that long pilgrimage in stony places when she was to be 'far from His face,' when she was to cry out, 'O God, Who sittest *silent* on high!'

A photograph of the Grand Duchess Mother with her six daughters, Charlotte at her place on her right, Marie Adelaide on her left, shows the ex-Grand Duchess with her sweet smile playing about her lips, and something trustful looking out from her lovely eyes, and always that virginal magic emanating freely from her slim young body. . . . It was the last time they were all to be together. As flowers never give forth a sweeter perfume than before a storm, so was it with that rose of Luxemburg, Marie Adelaide.

CHAPTER V

MORNING RED

‘Morgenroth!

Leuchtest mir zum frühen Tod’

DAWN of September 14th, 1920. The snow-crested Alps that had lain all night silver under a harvest moon were red, the colour dripping thickly like life-blood down their sides. The trees of the park had already been dipped into a golden dye by the fingers of the first frosts. That dawn turned them, too, into blood. It was a sacrificial world.

At five o'clock the Countess Anna went to awaken Marie Adelaide.

‘I found her up and already finished with the simple business of her toilette. She was standing very still in the middle of that room of her childhood, a slight, dark-robed figure, with something imposingly detached in her attitude. A small, straw valise easily containing the few necessities for the journey lay open on the floor, her convent “trousseau” having already been sent on to Modena. I thought of all those pale shimmering satins and silks that she had worn with such shy majesty, then quickly that she seemed more prepared for the wearing of the nuptial garments she had chosen — brown dress, white mantle, linen wimple and black veil. She had smiled palely as I entered, then her deeply-circled eyes filled sud-

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denly and she fell into a convulsive sobbing. It was the third time in all our years together that I had seen her weep. Once in some childish access of temper; that time in the train which took her for ever over the borders of her Duchy; on this morning when of her own will and seemingly in conformity to a safe and hidden destiny, she was saying farewell to the halls of her childhood. I made a natural movement to embrace her, she slipped over to the window where that red light from the Alps caught her dark, bowed figure, separating it untouchably, it seemed to me, from all else. I couldn't really approach her though everything in me moved towards her. When she turned back into the room her face had something dark and mask-like about it, though her head was outlined in a kind of glitter. I seemed to see each hair.

"*Es thut doch weh,*" (it hurts all the same) she said, and though the words were so simple they seemed cut bleedingly from her heart. She made a familiar gesture as of dismissal — though I knew it was not to me. I had the feeling that it was to her grief — she could not know it was to give place to a greater. She asked me to bring her a little prayer book she had once given me and holding it up to that morning light wrote quickly on the fly-leaf:

*"Die Herzen in Gemeinschaft
beim Gottlichen Heiland gilt
eine Liebe die über der
Trennung Leid erhaben*

Freitag den 14 Sept. 1920"

(Hearts that are united in Christ love with a love that

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is beyond all separation. Friday, September 14th, 1920.) She raised her head—never can I forget that look of remembrance, a whole lifetime was in it. She held the pencil up a moment between that small thumb and forefinger, then bending again she added, perhaps a little also for her own consolation:

“*Wir werden doch immer zusammen bleiben wenn auch nicht äusserlich. Deine dankbare M.*” (We shall always be together even if not outwardly. Thy grateful M.)

‘As she passed out of her room she turned and threw a last look at its familiar walls, at little objects of use that she had always taken so small account of. Tears came again, her lips trembled, a bright red colour surged into her cheeks. But when she entered the chapel her face was marble pale and as composed as one of the statues. She seemed no more than a shadow of one of them as she passed up the aisle to kneel close by her mother on that red-cushioned prie-dieu bearing the arms of her House. It was half past five o’clock. As the Mass proceeded everybody began to cry and wipe their noses and shuffle their feet. *She* remained motionless, her head in her hands, not even rising for the Gospel.

‘She passed first out of the chapel. It seemed her right as Bride, as one, too, who once had worn a crown.

‘We breakfasted. Marie Adelaide sat by her mother, receiving her cup from those beloved hands. One of her sisters spread her bread with butter, very thickly. It was soon over. We couldn’t have borne it any longer. She was smiling when she made her last farewell, the whole household drawn up at the door.

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As she had left Castle Berg on that foggy morning in full composure so now she left Hohenburg in all that red light. Long afterwards one to whom she was dear said: 'We should have broken a box of spikenard over her.'

'She got into the motor with her mother and her sister for the long drive to Innsbruck where they were to take the train to Modena. The last thing we saw was a movement to lean her head against her mother's shoulder.

'How could we know that in that awful rose of dawn we should have been crying the old words of the soldier's song:

*'Morgenroth!
Leuchtest mir zum frühen Tod.'**

* 'Morning red!
Lightest me to early death.'

CHAPTER VI

MODENA

'The desire of our soul fashions a desert unto itself'

THE day of September 19th darkened into night after one of those incomparable sundowns of the golden Italian autumn, when the slanting light lays its thickest gilding over the world of men and nature. Fields, orchards, vineyards, groves were at the moment of their last luscious abundance, human forms were bending, gathering, carrying—all briefly, insubstantially aglow. Marie Adelaide's eyes turned now to them, now to the wider loveliness, so soon to be shut away from her — those black, motionless cypresses brushed with gold, those olives running like molten silver down scarred hill-sides, those green, vine-draped mulberry fields, that serene, vast sky pierced by those many campanili. In such magnificence the doors of the cloister of the Discalced Carmelites of the Via San Giovanni del Cantone were to close upon Marie Adelaide's royal youth. Come at last was the secret moment, the long-desired hour. Born to rule, her only wish now was to be subject to another's will. She who had lived in castle and palace hotly desired to exchange those rich spaces for a bare and narrow cell. In her Book of Hours, dated September 1st, 1920, was found in German the familiar lines of the great Saint of Avila whose daughter she aspired to be.

M A R I E A D E L A I D E

*‘Nichts störe dich,
Nichts verwirre dich,
Alles geht vorüber,
Gott ändert sich nicht,
Mit Geduld erlangt man alles;
Wer Gott besitzt hat an nichts Mangel,
Gott genügt.’**

One of her last acts at Modena was to send a post card to the Countess Anna, signed also by the Grand Duchess mother and the Princess Elizabeth. It shows the apse of the Cathedral of Modena. Begun in 1099 by the great Countess Matilda, among whose possessions the city was, designed by Lanfranco, the bell-tower, called La Ghirlandina from the bronze garland surrounding the weather-cock, is one of the loveliest of Italy. That afternoon the three women passed in through the great portals of its façade preserving those curious sculptures of the twelfth century, to kneel for a last time freely together in its low-vaulted dimness, — bowed, motionless, votive figures.

They remember how Marie Adelaide on coming out, stopped with a quick, childish delight before a chestnut vendor, bending over his dusty brazier. Having no money of her own, she begged of her mother the few centesimi necessary. She warmed her hands

- * ‘Let nothing disturb thee,
Let nothing affright thee;
All things are passing;
God never changeth;
Patience attains all things;
Who God possesseth
Wants for nothing;
God alone suffices.’

Longfellow's translation.

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against the little cornucopia of newspaper, then taking one of the nuts out she looked fixedly at it, running her fingers slowly over the lovely polish of its brown shell. With a sudden shiver she put it back, passing the little package to her mother, drawing her jacket more closely about her. There was symbol and prophecy in all she did. In silence they returned to the hotel.

The post card to the Countess Anna ran simply: 'Only a few words, dear B.; we are united in thoughts and prayers now and always. The journey went well. *I am entering at 6.* I was proud of your courage and it helped me a lot. Fondest love. Yours M. Lissi just gave me your dear letter. Thanks a 100,000 times. God bless you and thank you for everything.'

The three women went out again into that golden world from which the light had begun to fade. . . .

Long after the Grand Duchess mother wrote: 'In that dusk I committed my first-born, my darling, to the Prioress. Her last act was to bend very low over my hand kissing it repeatedly. I drew her to me and she looked into my eyes with a long, filial, unforgettable look that seemed to seal our separation with a sombre heat. . . . After a moment we left the austere, white-washed parlour towards whose grill and curtain Marie Adelaide had already turned.'

CHAPTER VII

SAN GIOVANNI DEL CANTONE

'Hide not from me the beauty of Thy face'

FROM the first Marie Adelaide, like Madame Louise, desired that no exceptions, no mitigation of the Holy Rule be made in her favour, no 'augusteries' as the latter called it.

There is a slight withdrawal, trembling rather, of the veil of her new life in a letter from the prioress in the finest copper-plate handwriting which bears the date October 25th, 1920, and is to the Countess Anna. She had then been little over a month in the 'fiery furnace of Carmel.' After many expressions of sympathy to the Countess Anna for the loss of her father (two finely written pages) the letter answers her questions concerning Marie Adelaide. As it is typical of conventual correspondence in all that it says and in all that it does not say, I give that part, three finely written pages, relating to the ex-Grand Duchess.

' . . . I now take pleasure in giving you news of our dear and much-loved little Sister. She is for each of us an object of admiration because of those virtues which more and more we recognize in her, and our consolation is great in seeing how she has begun to accustom herself to the life of Carmel and to the especial exercises of the novitiate. Always

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amiable and grateful our august postulant is of a touching humility. She has now a greater air of gaiety, and though we do not question her too often as to her interior trials it seems to us by her whole outward bearing and the smile upon her lips that the sorrow of her heart has become less. I hope that this will soon give place to a complete happiness at finding herself in Carmel, at feeling herself called to the Mystical Marriage with Divine Love.

'She looks very well and she assures us that she does, in fact, feel so; her digestion, it is true, was somewhat upset on the Feast Day of Our Mother Theresa (October 15th) on account of the food to which she was no longer accustomed, but the day after she was again in her usual good health. She greatly likes to be occupied with the housework of the convent and is distressed when we fear too greatly to fatigue her. Dear child! May the good God Who has chosen her and taken her from out the world heap upon her those blessings which we so ardently desire for her.

'In regard to your letters to her I take pleasure in telling you that I am glad to have you write as often as you wish because of the help your letters are to your little sister. Though our Rules forbid us any lengthy correspondence, I willingly allow an exception for M. Adelaide in regard to You, because I know that you aid each other to progress in the love of Jesus and of souls. I regret that in order to keep our Holy but Austere Laws I must demand from my dear Postulant the sacrifice of her mother-tongue. Even as she has understood, so also will

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You that it is only from a love of regularity and a sense of duty that I do so. Our Rule commands the Prioress to read all correspondence coming in or going out of the convent and I, unfortunately, know neither German nor English. To such a degree is renunciation of self demanded from a Carmelite.

‘I have decided not to mention your letter to me to Marie Adelaide and I beg You to do the same.

‘And now, my dear Countess, I must close, begging You sometimes to remember me and my Community in your prayers. Also receive the expression of my affectionate devotion,

‘Your very humble

‘Sister Theresa of Jesus C.D.
‘Prioress.’

These hopes were not to be realized. The veil that hangs over the next few months stirs occasionally and significantly; at last a pale hand draws it back—a pale finger points again towards that ice-cold world to which Marie Adelaide was to return.

The novice mistress had soon become aware of a definite decline in physical and nervous health. At first she thought it was caused by the sudden cessation of smoking as well as the frugal fare. Though Marie Adelaide had lighted one cigarette from another on that journey from Hohenburg to Modena, from the moment of her entry into the convent she said that she never willingly lent herself to the desire; but she often saw little rings of smoke forming themselves in the air.

She was accustomed also to a heavy northern diet. The usual meagre fare of the Carmelites, thinned by

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the natural abstemiousness of the Italians was further diminished by post-war rationing. It resembled not at all those substances which had built up her tall and willowy form, that had given colour to her lips and cheeks, light to her eyes.

Those steaming bowls of thick *café au lait*, that homely but delicious *potage fermière*, those sugared and spiced braised hams seasoned during long months, that jugged hare, the delight of her father, those juicy steaks smothered in onions, those *Mehlspeisen*, — sweet dishes — of so many kinds and flavourings. Neither did the thin, well-watered wine resemble that 'Moselblümchen' of Grevenmacher, nor even the *petit vin* of Remich. Though all this had been greatly reduced or entirely discarded during the war years, still the substance of her childhood, of her adolescence, had been rich and bounteous. . . . Then that free joy in the beauty of the natural world, essential function of her being, was suspended.

There is a schedule of her days among the daughters of Saint Theresa copied from a slip of paper found in her prayer book, in German. The labour of the convent being done entirely by the nuns the day's work is not light. Though each twenty-four hours in the life of a Carmelite seems run in an iron mould, to those having a conventual vocation there is nothing stereotyped in it. The acts that fill it be they of housework or of prayer are performed with the varying degrees of fervour breathed by the Spirit into each soul. Done *sub specie aeternitatis* (under the species of eternity) they become warm, living, elastic — for those who are chosen.

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'5.30-6	Arising, washing, dressing, etc.
6-7	Holy Mass and Holy Communion
7-8	The little Hours, Prime, Terce Sext, etc.
8	Breakfast
8-9	Housework, doing up our* cell, etc., kneading bread.
9-9.45	Second Holy Mass.
10-11	Housework, dusting, mending, sweeping.
11.15	Midday meal (lasts a long time)† Beforehand examination of con- science.
12-1	Recreation — sewing, walking in the garden.
1-2	Housework, reading, writing (only I this last)
2-2.45	Vespers.
2.45-4.45	Again housework, picking over fruit, etc., writing (this last only to whom especially permitted).
4.45-5	Preparation.
5-6	Meditation.
6-6.45	Supper.
6.45-7.45	Recreation — sewing or walking in the garden.
7.45-8.15	after this, bed for those who do not go to Matins.

* The Carmelite never speaks of anything as 'hers', not even her cell where she is always alone.

† Not the meal itself, with its scant portions of vegetables, fruit, bread and wine, but the reading from the lives of the Saints or from books of devotion.

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8.15-9 Rest.
9-10.45 Matins, Lauds and examination of conscience.

11 Bed.

Each sister has a further office. Postulants not, the younger ring the Angelus bell, etc. The others are still too new, as I also.'

To fill out this skeleton of a Carmelite's daily life some mention must be made of the austerities with which it is enfolded.

Each Carmelite is provided with a porringer, a wooden spoon, an earthenware cup. Whoever breaks or cracks one of these objects accuses herself of it on her knees in the refectory. There is, of course, nothing but abstinence fare, rice, milk foods, vegetables, fish on Feast days, occasionally eggs. The seasoning for all this is work and fasting. It is a well-known fact, however, that many a young woman of the most delicate constitution, has not only survived the fasts and abstinences, cold and heat of this manner of life, but has been incredibly strengthened by them, living to a great age.

As for recreation Saint Theresa enjoins gaiety on her daughters. From Madame Louise de France we take the following: 'We have a whole hour when we laugh wonderfully, working all the time as we sit on our heels on the ground, but that doesn't in the least constrain the spirit and the heart. They are free and open and enjoy themselves truly. We talk agreeably of whatever is likely to interest each other.'

'The cell should be,' Madame Louise continues

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‘a Paradise where the Carmelite always finds her Divine Spouse ready to listen to, and answer her; where the Blessed Virgin and the Saints await her homage and offer her their protection.’

This ‘Paradise’ is furnished, since Saint Theresa reformed the Order, in the following wise: A crucifix, a holy water font, a straw pallet, with a block of wood for pillow, a straw-seated chair, a little wooden bench for books of devotion, an earthenware pitcher and basin, a little broom. Excess of cold and heat is often the Carmelite’s greatest trial. We quote again from Madame Louise: ‘I thought I should smother from the heat the last few days. My only resource was to think that my sweat would help put out the fires of Hell and those of Purgatory which I deserve every moment by my cowardice in bearing this inconvenience.’ She adds, ‘The heat has been so great that in the morning I find my habit still wet from the perspiration of the day before.’

Again: ‘I am freezing. Often I think my fingers will drop off. Yet I am still favoured for this winter I have had no chilblains. . . . I was dying it seemed to me of cold.’

More than a hundred years after, another of Saint Theresa’s daughters was to write: ‘What caused me the greatest physical suffering during my religious life was the cold. I suffered from it till I nearly died.’ What this delicate child had to endure in the course of the long Norman winters in the damp climate of Lisieux can be imagined from the following:* ‘When the weather was severest and she had been stiff with

* Marie Delarue-Mardrus: *Sainte Thérèse de Lisieux*.

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cold all day the Servant of God would go at night after Matins to the common room to warm herself for a few minutes, but to reach her cell she was obliged to walk fifty yards in the open air through the cloister, up a stairway, through a freezing corridor which took from her the little warmth she had grudgingly allowed herself. When at last stretched out on her straw pallet covered with two thin blankets she found only a chill, sleepless, half-repose. On the day of her death this child-martyr, Saint Thérèse of Lisieux, said to the Community that she 'thought in the observance of the Rule the failure to take into account differences in climate and in temperament was to tempt God and sin against prudence.'

The anonymity, the silence of the Carmelite life during the centuries has only occasionally been broken by some inspired soul. Marie Adelaide, though she was peculiarly caught between the upper and nether millstones of her desire and her temperament preserved this anonymity, this silence. It is only inferentially, in its results, that we know anything of it. Unlike the great Spaniard, her mother Theresa, she had no gift at depicting her soul. She was to go through that 'toil of knees and heart and hands' without avail. She was to await in vain that 'heavenly melody intolerably sweet.' She was never to receive what St. Catherine calls *quel dolce cento* — that sweet hundredfold.

The letters she wrote from the convent, all in French, continued to be as bare as its walls. There was never the slightest indication that she was treading the winepress of spiritual despairs. She asks about her mother, her sisters, her home. One of her letters says, 'a good

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day. I was allowed to sweep the garden paths.' Another, 'I had the pleasure of hanging the heavy, wet linen out to-day.'

Meditation on Saint Theresa's allegory of the 'well-watered garden' was enjoined upon her. Prayer as understood by the great Spaniard is not petition. Rather it is the preparation of the soul for an influx of the Divine. The allegory, by which thousands, hundreds of thousands, of her daughters have, through the ages, attained to some understanding of prayer is briefly the following:

'A beginner must look upon herself as making a garden wherein our Lord may take His delight, but at first in a soil unfruitful and abounding in weeds. . . . The garden may be watered in four ways: by water taken out of a well, which is very laborious; or with water raised by means of a windlass, this is a less troublesome way than the first and gives more water; or by a stream or brook, whereby the garden is watered in a still better way. . . . or by showers of rain when Our Lord Himself waters it without labour on our part and this way is incomparably better than all the others.

'In the fourth stage a rain falls directly from heaven: this is union with God. . . . What union is, is plain enough, two distinct things becoming one. O my Lord, how good Thou art! He that has had ecstasies will understand this well; to him who has not it will be but folly. . . . It seemed to me when I offered some resistance, as if a great force beneath my feet lifted me up. I know of nothing to compare it with. . . I was afterwards as one ground to pieces.'

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Vocal prayer is an antecedent, quite elemental stage which Saint Theresa does not even mention. The first degree that she speaks of is mental, dependent on meditation.

‘The soul which begins to walk in the way of mental prayer with resolution and which is determined neither to rejoice nor to be greatly afflicted whether sweetness and tenderness fail it or our Lord bestows them, has already travelled a great part of the road. . . . There are two dangers to be guarded against at this stage. The first is neglect of the body. . . .’ ‘Take care, then, of the body, for the love of God, because at times the body must serve the soul. . . .’ ‘The second danger is to aspire to supernatural states of prayer before the soul is ready.’ Saint Theresa is at one with all the great mystics in insisting that there should be no indiscreet forcing of the spiritual life. With her surpassing common sense she was fully aware of the difficulties besetting the life of a nun.

In the intricate round of conventual life there is no place for those who cannot revolve unhinderingly with its appointed order. Its operations demand inexorably that strangest of all things — vocation. The absence of it in even a single member tends to clog the wheels of cloister or monastery. In many it would entirely destroy their action. The history of any religious order makes this clear. In contemplative orders the mechanism is of the most delicate, the greatest wisdom is required on the part of the superiors to fit the body for its changeless, exhausting exterior round, while allowing the soul its free interior development according to temperament and gift.

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The teaching and charitable orders though demanding great technical skill on the part of superiors to fit their diverse members for a unified life of use and constant self-abnegation are less difficult of administration. Even with them, however, the hasty must become measured, the proud lowly, the ease-loving selfless, the hard mild, the undecided sure. No order can survive without those at its head gifted with intuition, reason, firmness, judgment and a general understanding of the soul and body, of their infinite varieties, their endless combinations. When to urge forward, when to hold back; how to chasten without slaying, how to discipline without breaking until that being, unfathomable according to the plummet of the world, is formed — a nun. No order but finds among its members those who in some degree are fitted to carry on the strange wisdom of its founder. In the nature of things these come to the head of administration.

There is, too, a technique of prayer as of anything else. And it is not acquired from one sunrise to another. One thing is certain: vocation is as necessary for it as is an ear for music for the musician, an eye for colour for the artist. Without these who would dream of embarking on the career of musician or of painter?

The conventual unfitness of Marie Adelaide has never been explained, neither with the Carmelites nor later with the Little Sisters of the Poor. It is, however, of import to those who have gazed upon the dark splendours and bright miseries of the mystical life. Thrown into the 'fiery furnace' of Carmel, she was consumed not tempered.

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The entirely unexpected impossibility of nervous and physical adjustment to the changeless aspiration of her soul may, it is thought, have been caused by some hitherto unsuspected beginning of neurasthenia. She soon became the prey of melancholy, that infrequent affliction of conventual life, the usually reserved area of her soul visibly flecked with its disconcerting darkness. She, always seemingly withdrawn into certain secrecies, found herself entirely lacking in that capacity for meditation without which the life of a contemplative is impossible. On the rare occasions when later she spoke of this, it was always as 'my unworthiness.' She clearly felt, too, in some peculiar nervous sense the limitations of the convent walls, something claustrophobic. Long afterwards she was to speak of the spreading branches of a single stone pine growing just outside its confines, of which she could see the symmetrical top from the garden; also of a little green-gold lizard that she discovered one morning darting through the pink, sun-baked walls.

But broken health, disarray of nerves, nostalgia, are not sufficient explanation. Countless women of the frailest constitution who could not have stood the wear and tear of social and competitive life are able to inure themselves to the rigours and mortifications of Carmel, the fatigues and humiliations of the Charitable Orders. The reason lies deeper, hidden in the more secret workings of temperament and destiny. Frustration was signed on Marie Adelaide's forehead, stamped on her heart. Neither crown nor cloister. 'Handful of dust' indeed.

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Of her own will she would have remained at Modena and pushed herself to the breaking point. She was thrown into panic at the possibility of being returned to a world of which she had thought herself well rid. Her very existence was involved, and that *non sum dignus* that she cried daily, hourly, was a cry of fear as well as of humility. Looking around her at that peaceful order of life she saw those many diversely fibred women pursuing in mental, moral and physical equilibrium the existence for which she had gladly renounced a crown. She begged her superiors not to dismiss her, crying, and in what suppressed agony the stark question reveals, 'What place have I any longer in that outside world?'

She had fallen into that fatal moment known to all in grief when the heart seems to have neither father, mother, lover nor any companion, and God himself is far. The pencilled words of January 21st, 1921, are deeply underscored, *ne me cachez pas la beauté de Votre Visage*.

Her departure from that house of Carmel into which she had entered with so confident a fervour was to bring about more complications in her personal life than the troubled years of her reign, than the hatreds of the War, than the dislocations following on her abdication. Did she sometimes in despair at her misplaced vocation regret her lost crown, her royal duties, all that which Prince Xavier's protection would have meant? There is no record. We only know that the desire of her soul had fashioned a desert unto itself.

The discipline of conventual life mostly operates in two extremes, strengthening or slaying. Marie Ade-

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laide's fate was this latter. Yet even at this period she does not seem to have wanted death. 'Only when I have loved God as purely and entirely as it is possible for me to love Him do I wish to die.' It was that ageless desire to glean from the heart its full harvest — of whatever seed — before leaving the earth.

CHAPTER VIII

TUSCAN SPRING—LITTLE SISTERS OF THE POOR, ROME— EINSIEDELN 1921-22

'Pourquoi t'affliges-tu, mon âme, et pourquoi me troubles-tu'

THERE is no key to Marie Adelaide's life. Its strange imperfections are only surpassed by its stranger perfections. One thing alone is sure: the quality of sanctity in character is more definite than any other.

She was to spend two years in Italy, years of interior abandonment and humiliation, of exterior pilgrimage and privation, enduring that mysterious and terrible 'being born of the spirit.'

When her family received the unequivocal word from the prioress, the Duchess of Parma (her mother's youngest sister) went to fetch her at Modena, taking her directly to Imbarcati, an estate of the Parma family near Pistoia, at the time unused, rather than to the publicity of the splendid dwelling of the Duchess at the Piánore di Lucca. At Imbarcati Countess Bardi, Princess of Bourbon, widowed and childless, gave herself up to the care of that once lovely niece whose altered outward appearance gave ample testimony to her interior anguish. Her slim figure was bloated; heavy shadows lay under the cheek-bones and about her eyes whose colour had paled; her rich, full-lipped mouth was drawn, her

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hands were red and swollen with chilblains. The operations of her feminine being had been suspended, frequent phenomenon among postulants and novices, throwing her further out of physical and nervous equilibrium.

The family desired above all things not to stress the unexpected failure of Marie Adelaide's vocation, so long in their thought as the useful and honourable solution of her existence. It had, too, been widely heralded throughout Europe. She was then twenty-five years old, with, apparently, a long life before her. How best to maintain its dignity — assure its usefulness — was the thought uppermost in the minds of those who loved her.

'Her superiors, whose experience of souls was great,' relates the Countess Bardi, 'told the Duchess of Parma that after a few weeks they had seen that a purely contemplative life would be impossible for Marie Adelaide adding also that they had from the beginning viewed with the greatest admiration the energy and selflessness with which, even to the smallest detail, she had given herself over to the rigours of the Carmelite Rule,* so clearly not in her gift and fate.

At Imbarcati they did not occupy the beautiful Sozzifanti villa because of its dismantled condition, lodging instead in one of the administration buildings. The villa, built by the Pistoian architect Lafri in the early seventeenth century came into the hands of the

* *Ihre Obern, deren Erfahrung ja sehr gross war, erkannten bald, dass sie nicht dieses rein meditative Leben ertragen wurde und bewunderten aber die Energie und den absoluten Opfersinn, mit welchem sie bis ins kleinste Detail der Regel nachkam, ohne jede Ermattung oder Widerwillen in sich aufkommen zu lassen.*

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Bourbons in 1862 as the gift of Nicolas Sozzifanti, Pistoian patrician. Its noble spaces knew Marie Adelaide's cousin, the Empress Zita, when fiancée of the Archduke Carl; her sister Charlotte had been a guest under its roof during her engagement to Prince Felix; many, many of her blood had lived, loved and been honoured in it. She, in the pursuance of her denuded destiny, remained outside its walls.

At first she seems to have sat listlessly during long, sunny hours in the park, dismayed, silent, in a vast *détente* of mind and body, seeking in the beauty of that vernal nature those consolations which Heaven had more directly denied her. When the late afternoon chill fell she would get up and walk slowly but freely through the fluid gold of Tuscan sunsets, brushing so redly the pink of almond blossoms, dyeing more deeply still the carpets of purple crocus on slope and meadow, turning the sepia hills of noon into rose. Or she followed the dim, fugitive paths of the park, inhaling the fragrance of pale budding box, the damp scent of moss on statue or on ivied amphora. About her was the world of those small creatures, always dear to her, wakening to spring. After supper she would often go out again under those stars of her childhood and those others, unfamiliar, of her misplaced destiny, hanging over that time and passion-scarred Tuscan night.

One likes to think that by all this beauty the soreness of her soul was for a time balsamed.

With returning strength there was a returning restlessness, and she began to take long walks alone in the environs of Pistoia high above the incomparable

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valley. Only a year before she had gone through that beauty of the Latin spring with a great hope in her heart. About her were again high-spreading pines, thick-growing ilexes, silver olive groves, solitary, velvety black cypresses; above her an unflecked sky. Those shimmering pink-grey mountains enfolded more softly than a caress the warm, pink-grey valley, clasped with the glittering girdle of the Arno. Nature was again in renewal. Again *alle Knospen sprangen*. . . .

But this period of abeyance was not to last. Her destiny was hot upon her trail, plaguing her once more with the urge to conventual life. Another letter from the Countess Bardi says:

‘Marie Adelaide hoped in a more active order to find some use for her returning energies, some aid to her spiritual growth. She who had been *Landesmutter*, who had always loved the disinherited, the aged, the helpless, felt herself drawn to the congregation of the Little Sisters of the Poor. A visit to their foundation in Florence strengthened this desire. She had a long conversation with the Superioress, and then wrote to the Mother General humbly begging to be taken into the Order. The Mother General was, however, out of Europe on one of her voyages of inspection. This we only much later learned, and the prolonged period of waiting for the answer wore greatly on Marie Adelaide. Her restlessness increased alarmingly, she was without appetite, unnerved by insomnia. I decided that some distraction was needed, so we made short journeys about Italy, beginning with Assisi, then Loreto, then Naples whence

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we went to the shrine in Pompeii. On our return we made a brief stay in Rome.

‘But all these journeys were really pilgrimages, Marie Adelaide seeming to find consolation and strength in each holy place. Having very little money we travelled in the greatest simplicity. Marie Adelaide had, before her entry into the Carmelite order, renounced all her possessions in favour of her mother and sisters. But the simplicity of her life was profoundly pleasing to her and it was with the greatest devotion that she practised Holy Poverty. She had few garments or underlinen and what she had she received from her sisters or aunts, new or cast-off as the case might be. She was admirable beyond words in her selflessness. The worst room, the hardest bed, the most primitive toilet arrangements she found more than good enough for herself, while for others she was of a sensitive solicitude. She chose always the cheapest articles of food on any menu and ate very sparingly of them. She took for her evening meal only a small portion of some inexpensive vegetable, zucchini, fennochi, a little artichoke, very occasionally allowing herself a bit of cheese afterwards. She would pretend that she had no appetite, and deceived even me so that I only later understood that she had done all this out of humility and mortification. We ate mostly in small, cheap *trattorie* and each ordered as she pleased. Looking back on it I think her intention was to fast, and only once a day to make a meal. This, too, was of the simplest — a *frittura mista*, sometimes a small portion of mutton, for which she had never cared.’

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In the autumn of 1921 she went again to the Eternal City. The convent of the Little Sisters of the Poor and their well-known house for the care of the aged and infirm at San Pietro in Vincoli was her goal.

It was an unfashionably, black-clad young woman with shy, veiled eyes, and deprecatory mien who made the journey in a third class carriage with the Countess Bardi. Little by little she was being dispossessed of everything. Of her glittering youth naught remained but the 'handful of dust.' Not fitted to be a cloistered spouse of Christ, 'sweet friend of the soul,' she hoped at least to become a ministrant to the least wanted of His children, spending their last useless days in the care of that now mighty order founded by the Abbé Le Pailleur and two devout serving women in the little Breton village of Saint Servan.

Then followed a few months of washing, dressing, feeding blubbering, slobbering old men as Soeur Marie des Pauvres, of begging their bread about the streets of Rome.

'Here also,' relates the Countess Bardi, 'she was to find no peace, for the superioress of the Roman foundation made Marie Adelaide understand that she did not think she had a vocation for their order and advised her to find some other form of activity, enjoining her to leave the convent as soon as possible. Neither she nor any of us ever understood the motive for this second dismissal. It can only be explained as part of her predestined, sorrowful Way of the Cross, that also this attempt to lead a conventual life should, without apparent reason, have come to naught.' (*Es muss zu dem von Gott für M.A. bestimmten Kreuzes*

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und Leidensweg gehört haben, dass auch dieser Versuch zum Klosterleben ohne augenscheinliche Gründe scheiterte.)

After this she remained for a while hidden as boarder in a small nunnery in Rome, spending her days mostly in visits to shrines that she had known in happier days. But always alone. Acquaintances she had never had. Those of her blood were far. The Countess Anna was in Bohemia, events, in that dissolving world, having forced her to take up new duties at the castle of Count Czernin.

More and more Marie Adelaide suffered from that disequilibrium between her will and her destiny. Despised. Rejected. She was not wanted even to carry platters of food to old men; she was not wanted to beg that food about the streets of Rome. She was hanging in spiritual void, coldest of human experiences. Yet she must still bear the name of which she had twice tried to rid herself. She could not even live anonymously.

‘On my return to Rome,’ continues the Countess Bardi, ‘I found Marie Adelaide’s health completely undermined by privation, exertion, grief and humiliation. To this was now added a definite physical ill-being. A doctor was immediately, and against her wishes, sent for. He could not say if her malady were a form of paratyphus or a severe attack of malaria, but he declared her condition serious, and again against her will she was transferred to the clinic of a nursing order in a healthier part of Rome. There she remained without the exact nature of her illness being diagnosed though consulting doctors were called in. ‘Too much bother and cost for my poor body that has

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neither place nor use upon the earth,' she would say.

Finally on account of the great heat, and the relaxing climate which had never suited that northern Nassau blood needing to be frosted—even frozen out—once a year, Countess Bardi insisted on taking her to Switzerland. Only that sense of obedience to her aunt, to her mother, enabled her to leave that city of so many hopes, so many heartaches.

'We went directly,' continues the Countess Bardi, to Einsiedeln, where, as there was no money for hotels, we took lodgings in a simple convent *pension* in which Marie Adelaide spent some months. There her mother and several of her sisters visited her. That she might not feel herself useless she taught in an elementary school belonging to the nuns. Her consolations were daily Mass and Communion in the great church; in the afternoon we always assisted at the far-famed chanting of the *Salve Regina*. Early she sought counsel of the Abbot. We have a snapshot of her slender, black-robed figure against the great *Platz* on her way over its high cobblestones about to ascend the wide-armed steps of the church, about to be swallowed up in its great doors. Like the first abbot, St. Eberhardt, this gifted man was an enlightened director of souls, unusually skilled in matters of vocation, versed in the technique of prayer, broken to monastic life, knowing its complex difficulties as well as its harmonies and rewards. Afterwards he said, 'I realized myself to be in the presence of an elect soul done with the world, yet I could only say to her:

"Go home, my child, go to your mother. God will give you ample occasion to do good in the world.

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It does not seem to be His will that you serve Him under a conventual rule. Return to Hohenburg; you will find strength for the next step whatever it may be. First get your nerves and body in order that they may better serve your soul.”’

Late one afternoon walking back from the eminence behind the monastery, where she and her sister Charlotte, come on a brief visit, had gone to watch the sun set redly over the wintry lake far below, she spoke for the first time of that pine tree visible above the walls of the convent at Modena, and recalled too, with a faint smile, the little green lizard that she had often watched at the recreation hour darting in and out of a crack in the sun-baked wall.

That urge to community life was woven disastrously with something inherently free and personal in her heart. What agonies she had endured, caught between those conflicting desires, that altered appearance gave testimony. Her suffering, her confusion, her humiliation began at last to express themselves.

‘Certainly it is not for shelter, for raiment, for three meals a day, nor for acts according to my own pleasure that I was born?’

‘If through humiliation one attains holiness then I must be at least on the way,’ half in despair, half in mockery of herself.

And again with that shy falling of heavy, white lids over violet eyes: ‘I have known the first death; the second will be easier.’

The prospect of life in the world, even in the retired, simple form which would be hers at Hohenburg, seems to have left her restless, uncertain, sad,

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with those vague desires for death that frequently lie in wait for the soul vainly seeking the form of its own beauty, finding instead something inchoate, dark and unresolved.

'I have suffered too much. Something has snapped,' she once let fall from lips that had lost their smile, 'I have had too much for one heart, one life.'

It has been said that 'one may not dispute with anyone concerning the reality of his sufferings; it is with sorrows as with countries — each man has his own.' Marie Adelaide's sorrow was now that of the nocturnal, migratory soul, finding naught where it may cling and rest its wings.

'From Einsiedeln,' relates the Countess Bardi briefly, 'she went again to Rome towards which her heart turned nostalgically, accompanied by her sister Hilda. They stayed for awhile with the Countess Leopoldine Stolberg, Marie Adelaide's only friend, besides the Countess Anna, outside that close family circle. She too, was drawn, unrealizably, to the Carmelite life which was the underlying bond.'

'Even then Marie Adelaide was hoping that some Order would receive her in which she might find the peace her soul needed, and also a screen from the world before which she felt herself stripped and bare. . . .

'At last her mother bade her return home. Again, in obedience, she prepared to leave Rome, again greatly against her personal will. It involved the final humiliation of acknowledging the failure of her vocation before the world which had made so great

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a case of her entry into religion. It had become a part of the history of her reign, of that of the Duchy. She was persuaded that her failure had brought shame upon her princely house.*

‘Obsessionally she dwelt upon the fact that thousands of royal women with less physical strength than hers, with no deeper conviction of vocation than hers had, through the ages, lived long, honourable, happy and useful lives in cloister and in cell. She always kept in her prayer book a little coloured picture of her namesake, the Empress-Saint Adelheid.’†

* John Buchan in his *Nations of To-Day: Belgium and Luxemburg*, dismisses the Grand Duchess with a curt footnote. ‘The Grand Duchess Marie Adelaide entered a Carmelite convent at Modena.’

† The story of this daughter of King Rudolph of Burgundy and consort of King Lothair of Italy, presents itself to mind and eye like some wide-flung Gothic tapestry. At nineteen years of age she found herself widowed with one small child. Many misfortunes subsequently befell her. Berengarius, Margrave of Ivrea, demanded that she should become the wife of his son, and on her refusal took her crown and lands from her and cast her into prison. The picture shows her escaping over a wild forest path to the Castle of Canossa, her son in her arms wrapped about with her long blue mantle; little flowers are springing up in her path, darkened by great pine trees. Her hooded head is crowned and haloed.

The Emperor Otto I hearing of her plight hurried to her aid, overcame Berengarius, and taking the royal woman to wife himself, amid the rejoicing of the people, put again the stolen crown upon her head. At his death Adelheid assumed the regency for her young son, and during some years the land had the benefit of her wisdom and virtue. As Otto II he married the haughty and rule-loving princess Theophania who succeeded in banishing the Empress Adelheid from the land, her empire over her amorous husband for a while being boundless. Later Otto repenting him of his unfilial acts gave once more into her hands the government of Italy . . . The last years of her life the holy Empress spent in the cloister of Selz that she had built near Strasbourg.

CHAPTER IX

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'Euch theuere Halle'

WE know with what high and holy hopes Marie Adelaide had left the castle of Hohenburg, bathed in that early, sacrificial red.

April 1922 saw her return to Bavaria. She delayed a few days in Munich at the bedside of Countess Leopoldine Stolberg. On the twenty-first she entered again, shyly, deprecatingly, penitentially, with bowed head and downcast eyes those halls of her childhood. Her once bright colouring was half effaced. When her mother embraced that beloved form grown thin to emaciation it was as if some central essence had irretrievable flowed out.

Slowly, slowly the peace and affection of family life, the long days spent freely wandering in the ripening fields, and bronzing forests, the care of her animals, the wide, familiar beauty of the Alps, normal hours of sleep, abundant food, did their sure work. Though sad she was young. A neurasthenic *Menschenfurcht* increased, however, and she kept to a sort of frightened, sensitive privacy, always absenting herself when visitors were expected.

On November 14th took place the nuptials of her sister Elizabeth, 'Lissi,' to Louis Philip, Prince of Thurn und Taxis. For the event Marie Adelaide allowed herself to be dressed suitably, though very

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simply, in a dove-grey gown with a string of her mother's pearls about her neck. She remained on her knees during the ceremony, her face hidden in her hands. It was the only one of the weddings of her sisters at which she was present.

But soon again the blind King John's motto, '*Ich dien*,' was to draw her mirage-like from her home, from all security. The week after the wedding she departed for Cologne to work in the hospital of the Franciscans. She then inspected various Red Cross institutions on the Rhine, but with a certain aimlessness. It was as if having once given up her will she needed to be under continued obedience. Her little bark was visibly adrift, uncertain of making any port. Carmel, wherein since adolescence she had thought to live and die, adoring, penitential bride of Christ, was closed. She had hoped to see in the worn and vacant visages of the babbling old men of San Pietro in Vincoli His shining face, beacon and direction. It remained hidden from her.

On the twenty-fifth of the next February (1923), she returned to Hohenburg, having decided to study medicine. On April 12th she went to Munich, taking up her habitation alone in a simple pension at 6 Luitpoldstrasse. There she began to work for her *Matura* at the University, going back and forth in the tramways, her books under her arm, like any poor student, clad in a short, dark skirt and plain jacket with a none too handsome piece of fur about her throat. Except for an occasional involuntary gesture of dismissal, nothing in her mien betrayed that she had once worn a crown. She grew more and more shy

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of personal contacts, more inaccessible to friendship. Though her great eyes were always deeply circled, her lovely smile still sometimes broke like sudden sunlight over her shadow-darkened face whose colours were now entirely effaced. Caught up in the 'dark night of the soul,' bewildered she fingered the walls of her destiny, seeking an issue, a use and reason for her life.

It has been said that 'the natural man is like the ore out of the iron mine. It is smelted in the furnace, it is forged into bars upon the anvil, a new nature is at last forced upon it and it is made steel.' She sought insistently the uses of this new nature that she felt evolving from grief and disappointment, but vainly; for God called her name no more, said no more unto her, 'I am thy salvation.'

With this there was an increasing nostalgia, become a bodily illness, for the land of her birth, for its bright rivers, its dark forests, its green fields, its scarred and legend-bearing heights, for all that was her Duchy's stuff, colour, use. She fingered books on its history, spoke with a deeper pride of its noble resistance to destiny, with a profounder appreciation of those peculiar virtues embodied and transmitted by it through the centuries. And though she knew with mind and soul that it was a small thing to die unseeing and unseen of it, the slow poison of exile was working in the veins, in the nerves of this heiress-child of Luxemburg, this daughter of an ancient stock. 'I cannot express my longing for Luxemburg,' she once wrote from Munich, 'it is now four years since I left home. . . .'

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I quote again from Nikolaus Welter: 'The blood of northern and of southern princely houses encountered each other floodingly in her heart. Sometimes it was the virile, reasonable blood of the House of Nassau, again it was the unquiet blood of that of Braganza, with its natural love of domination, its caprices and procrastinations. She had not wished to rule in appearance but in reality. During the period of her reign she had felt herself responsible to God, called on to minister first and foremost to the welfare of Christian souls. The world was ice-cold to such fervours and convictions. It could not understand that holy zeal . . . Marie Adelaide was never in accord with the destructive tendencies of the sick, warring period, wherein her earthly years were cast. Her being was run in a crystal mould. Every compromise to her sense of responsibility to God was torture. She went apparently conquered but in reality steadfast in thought, act and word to whatever seemed her duty through the deathless flames of her ideal . . . But that tender, virgin figure with its large, quiet eyes, its sunny smile, was passing on its way to early death.

'She has been likened to her ancestress Matilda of Tuscany and to Saint Elizabeth of Thuringia, lovely mother of the poor and sick. . . . Though fully conscious during the years of her reign of her ancient princely origin, of its dignities and its prerogatives, once she had abdicated she felt herself only truly at ease in the concealing coif of a nun, in the enveloping apron of a good Samaritan. If it had been sufficient for Marie Adelaide to have incorporated in her young

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and lovely being those great personal virtues of which she was possessed she would doubtless have continued to receive from her subjects their enthusiastic homage and devotion during a long life. . . .'

But private virtue in rulers would seem, strangely, to be the last quality that is of service to their people. It appears to have no bearing on their public destiny nor on the fortunes of their subjects. History everywhere manifests this disconcerting fact.

However pure Marie Adelaide's intention and reasonable her act nothing mortal that she planted seemed to bear fruit. Scarcely had she been permitted to utter the proud device of that long-dead ancestor, the blind King John, '*Ich dien.*' Her life, as revealed in her death is, however, the mysterious vindication of the Cross. If crucifixion then, too, resurrection. Caught up in that deepest 'night of the soul,' it can indeed be said of her, 'On the way to purification there are two experiences which must be passed through, involving cruel suffering. The first the night of the senses when all lower desires are cast out; the second the night of the soul when it is thrown back on itself in its nakedness and deprived of all comfort and joy so that it may learn to stand alone.'

It is in another form the old but ever new injunction of Marcus Aurelius, 'the dreamy-eyed' Emperor, — 'Learn to stand erect.'

She felt herself shut away from the sweet and consoling 'communion of saints.' Even the immortal stanzas of St. John of the Cross that she learned in the admirable English translation of Arthur Symonds were words — not revelation.

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‘Blest night of wandering
In secret, when by none might I be spied,
Nor I see anything;
Without a light or guide,
Save that which in my heart burnt in my side.

‘That light did lead me on
More surely than the shining of noontide,
Where well I knew that One
Did for my coming bide;
Where He abode might none but He abide.

‘O night that didst lead thus,
O night more lovely than the dawn of light,
O night that broughtest us
Lover to lover’s sight
Lover with loved, in marriage of delight!’

Her piety which had always seemed to encase her invulnerably in the ‘whole armour of God,’ whatever her spiritual and temporal combats, now began to show flaws — certain scrupulosities, periods of indifference. Aspiration, impulse, determination have their tidal times. The saint is not always consenting to sainthood nor the sinner to his sin.

Towards the end of Marie Adelaide’s Munich sojourn a well-known woman’s doctor whom she was urged to consult said that he had recognized in her the beginning of neurasthenia, the shadow of its dark melancholy lying already over her face.

She was increasingly listless; decisions sometimes cost her so great a nervous and physical effort that

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her forehead would be bathed in sweat, her nostrils would grow pinched, her lips pale. She who had once slept deeply, dreamlessly the clock around, now slept fitfully, was easily disturbed, was distressed with dreams. Naturally *gourmande*, she ate little, irregularly, or not at all. She was pursued by misgivings as to certain of her governmental acts. She felt herself to have been charged divinely, circumstantially with a mission and incapable of fulfilling it. That dread weighing in the scales was ever present to her. Judgment. Though she had turned towards the dark journey, weary of that 'wandering between two worlds — one dead, the other powerless to be born,' she began to experience a new affright that took food from her mouth, sleep from her nights at the thought of death — that death that was to be consummated in effacement, in silence — except for a supreme cry when her body was to dissolve about her soul as simply as the soft fruit about the kernel.

She continued her studies for awhile, however, working all day and late into the night, keeping, too, her lifelong habit of going to early Mass in all weathers. It was often fasting that she attended her lectures. There was no measure in that desire to keep a step, at least, ahead of her inexorable fate.

In the summer vacation of 1923 she returned to Hohenburg. Her lassitude, her pallor, her emaciation were attributed by her family to overwork and the uncondusive conditions of her student life. At first, they said, she shunned all companionship, but watchful eyes would catch sight of her, sombrely clad, wandering slowly under the great trees of the

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park or through the fields. She sometimes mentioned gratefully the sunny odours of ripening rye and wheat, or the heavier scents of brook-washed evening meadows, with their purple carpets of nightshade, and once to her mother, 'It is heaven after the city streets.' After awhile she began to busy herself again with those long-loved, smaller things of creation — snails, moths, beetles, ants, bees, caterpillars, taking up the books of Fabre, or fingering volumes on the fungi of Bavaria and the Duchy, and after the old habit at Castle Berg, as autumn approached, seeking out and classifying many kinds of mushrooms, entranced by their silky orange and vermilion colours, their velvety browns and creams, their pungent, earthy odours. She had a way of walking rustlingly through fallen leaves and pine needles, scuffing them up with her tiny feet, or she would gather great clusters of crimson mountain ash and deep lavender asters or branches of yellow beech and red oak leaves, burying her face in them as if to inhale strength from them. But the life was gone out of her smile, the spring out of her step. Once at home she would go to her room throwing herself silent, exhausted, on her bed, begging to be left alone. She no longer made any plan or project concerning her return to Munich, to the University.

In the weeks before her last illness, though her smile was scarcely ever absent and her eyes were soft, they had in them that half sweet, half terrifying look peculiar to those whose destiny has found them out. She talked more than was her habit, especially of her sisters of the Modena cloister. Once when a very beautiful apple was given her she recalled with a shy, secret

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glance the words of that gorgeous Mother among whose daughters she was not to be enrolled, to whom a like fruit had been given: 'God from all time destined this apple for His daughter Teresa.'

Her mother writes: 'It was as if her long, dark road had had a sudden light thrown on it. We did not know whence it came. We could only look at each other in grateful surprise and ask "what is God doing with her?"' The answer was not long delayed.'

About this time her sister Hilda related the following dream: 'I awakened in the night bathed in sweat, breathing quickly, my arms aching, as if I had been carrying some heavy weight. In a large hall never before used for that purpose a Christmas tree was decked. My sisters and I had entered it carrying a long, narrow, burden covered with white silk, which we had brought from a room above. We laid it down silently by the bright tree, then began to call each other by name but always one name was missing, though we could not tell which, for there was confusion when we tried to count. We were five sisters, not six, but who gave no answer it was impossible for us to say.'

Her last walk was with that same sister on the Hohenburg road, through a pale, windless November afternoon, 'and Isar,' that river of her youth, 'rolling rapidly.'

'As we turned back the sun had already disappeared behind the Bruneck, but the Sukarspitze was for a moment still in flame. We stopped to watch the shadows creeping up. She said to me: "This is the picture of my life. Deep shadow. Strong light."

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Then she took my arm, leaning quite heavily upon it. I tried to hurry her, it was so cold and dark. It was as if she had lead in her feet. I was suddenly very frightened.'

CHAPTER X

DEATH AND TRANSFIGURATION

*'Be consoled. Thou wouldst not seek Me
if thou hadst not found Me'*

It was not till Marie Adelaide, daughter of kings, was laid within the 'reconciling grave,' that there was any clarification of her sombre destiny. From its darkness and from its silence emerged the bright beauty, the noble significance of her princely being. It was known then that light had always been signed upon her face.

She was to begin many things, to complete none, neither those of her external destiny nor of her interior wish and will. Renunciation of throne, of common mortal joys was to be of no avail. The flames of her most selfless desires were to turn to smoke, her heart from which they rose to fall quickly into ashes. From her who had naught was to be taken away even that which she had. There was clearly no place for her foot upon the earth. Her deathbed anguish, inalienable possession alike of prince and beggar, alone was hers — and after that her grave. Yet she had preserved to Luxemburg its greatest treasures — faith, security and independence. It remains indeed 'what it is,' and one can say truly of Marie Adelaide, 'deathward progressing to no death was that visage.'

On a certain predestined morning, the fifteenth of

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the eleventh month, she did not rise from her bed. No more pilgrimages, no more stony roads for her bruised feet, no more 'nights in a bad inn.'

Her mother had gone shortly before to Munich to be present at the confinement of her daughter Sophie, married to Ernest, third son of the King of Saxony, leaving Marie Adelaide at Hohenburg with two ladies-in-waiting, Countess Lynar and Baroness Brusselle. In the beginning the Lenggries doctor had declared the illness of slight import — influenza, and though the effects might last awhile, rest and care would bring her back to health. On her return to Hohenburg the Grand Duchess Marie Anne, however, immediately reckoned the illness as very grave. A Munich professor was called in consultation. He diagnosed it as paratyphus, a return, in a somewhat unaccountable form, of the malady that she had contracted in Rome when with the Little Sisters of the Poor.

'Once,' relates the Countess Bardi, 'I said to her "you must pray for your return to health and usefulness." She gave me a frightened look and began to tremble, answering, "I have never even thought of doing so." I saw how distressing the idea was, and seeking to give it another meaning I added, "it is not necessary to pray directly for healing but only to declare yourself ready to accept from God whatever His hand offers, be it death or life — that you will gladly live and suffer longer if it be His holy will." After a moment of painful interior indecision, she answered, that dear smile on her lips, "If you think I should I will do so." Then she turned her head

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away from me, closed her eyes and only by her wet lashes could I guess what the sacrifice was. She then made a slight gesture as of one wishing to be alone. I left her with her hands folded on her breast, her head turned aside on the pillow.

‘Though consumed with fever, restless and aching, she seems to have made a last vow never to ask for anything, not even a glass of water when thirsty, though when it was held to her lips she would drink gratefully. She who naturally had a gourmet’s taste for the good things of the table, no longer expressed a preference for any kind of nourishment, taking what medicines and food were brought her without indicating distaste or liking. She spoke neither of heat nor of cold, though her fever was followed often by a sub-normal temperature.

‘Her mother watched by her at night; during the day, one of her sisters, the nun Pancrazia or myself. She often fixed her eyes on the quiet, wimpled face, the veiled head of the nun, but with an expression of such interior reserve that none of us dared ask what it meant . . . She was always entreating those about her not to be anxious on her account, and would add with a little smile,

“*Nichts störe dich,
Nichts verwirre dich.*”

‘She never failed to ask very simply of whoever made her ready for night, “May I be at peace or do I need to reproach myself that by any act of impatience to-day I have wounded the loving heart of our Lord?” And, the stencilling years washed from her face, she

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would look like a very young and beautiful child, with that thick, short bright hair brushed back from her face, become much smaller. She had a special fondness for the prayers of Compline, and always repeated *In pace in idipsum dormiam et requiescam** with a sort of inner relief.

‘Daily the Host was brought to her . . . Then, already transfigured before our eyes, we knew that we must lose her.

‘She showed an increasing desire to be under obedience. She had practised in their first and in their final sense poverty and chastity. Now she placed herself entirely in the hands of her mother. It was as if not having been permitted to live out her short life under any conventual discipline, she sought another form of that desire.’

To what finality she carried this desire for obedience her mother’s words alone reveal.

‘Very early one morning after having been unusually restless during the first part of the night, she called “Mother.” I was dozing and chilly, and awakened with a start thinking she had been needing me and had not wanted to disturb me. As I gathered myself together I heard her saying in a very quiet voice:

“Mother, thou knowest that my only desire is to be obedient to thee even in thought and wish, to act only according to thy will in all things. *Mother, give me now thy permission to die.*”

‘I could only look in terror on her pale face, on her

* ‘In peace, in the selfsame I will sleep and I will rest.’ Psalm iv.

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form, so wasted that its outlines were scarcely visible under the bed covers. I could not speak. She called again like a child wanting some little thing:

“Mother, Mother, answer, let me go! What do I longer here? Nothing I have undertaken on earth has succeeded. Let me go.”

‘She closed her eyes, crossed her hands upon her breast waiting for me to speak the words I could not yet say. I began to cry, she handed me a little knot of handkerchief, quite damp. I realized afterwards that she had been weeping while I slept. She did not speak again. At last, I don’t know how long a time it was, I found myself saying what I knew I had to say:

“If it be God’s will, go, my first-born.”

‘She smiled at me: it was almost the old smile, but the look from her eyes broke my heart. All her suffering was in it.’

The Countess Anna, fatally detained in Bohemia while that incomparable friend was giving up her soul, writes:

‘Hilda sent me a telegram the evening before to say that the end was near, and begging prayers. That night I was lost in a dreadful void. I *couldn’t* pray. Nothing more to hope, nothing more to fear even. I would never look into her blue eyes again, never touch that small, dry hand. I must accustom myself to her absence for ever. How could such a thing be? Suddenly I found myself sitting up, every sense alert. “Maus” seemed to enter the room, shining, almost skeleton-like, for through the emaciated flesh I could

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see the bones of her body. Her face wore a radiant smile and she was tossing her bright curls back with a dear, familiar, childhood gesture. I stretched out my arms but the apparition withdrew quickly to a far corner of the room saying gently, lovingly: "Don't touch me." Then was gone. The straining and effort of my grief, too, were gone. She had said farewell but it was the farewell of two who would surely meet again.'

On that 24th of January, at the meridian hour, there knelt about Marie Adelaide's bed that mother, that compassionate aunt, those lovely sisters, that calm, wimpled nurse, those ladies-in-waiting, those faithful servitors, that minister of God, seeing how one dies whom 'the second death can in no way harm.'* They noticed shortly after noon a sudden change in her face. It became very white and glittering 'as if a ray from heaven had touched it,' and they thought they heard the words: 'Thou sweetness never failing, Thou blissful and assured sweetness.'

When she opened her eyes, her glance sought first her mother — it was indeed 'the dove to the ark' — then rested fleetingly on each beloved one of her blood. She must have thought of the absent Charlotte with child, for she murmured 'new life, new life.' Five years ago that winter month she had taken the golden crown from her own head to place it upon that lovely sister's.

* Countess Bardi (Princess of Bourbon), Hilda, Princess Schönburg, Antonia, Princess Rupprecht of Bavaria; Sophie, Princess Ernest Henry of Saxony; the priest, Benefiziat Fischer; the nun, Procrazia; all the members of the household.

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Suddenly she drew her limbs more closely together, folded her hands more tightly over her breast, but without any restlessness nor plucking at the sheet, and as she looked at them in a final outward recognition she whispered, 'Do not weep for me. Be happy with me.'

Her eyes closed, then came the words — but as if for herself alone: *Freude, Freude. O glücklich sein.* (Joy, joy. Oh, to be happy.)

So sad, so accepting was the first expression of her marbled face that it seemed to the mourners a symbolic mask of some comfortless sorrow of the heart, though her last words had been of joy. The large dark blue eyes, early closed upon earthly glories and griefs, remained deeply sunken, two straight lines graven between. Something austere, something of 'overcoming' lay about her. Long and terribly she had been 'born of the spirit.' It was only the second day that, dressed in the bridal gown of her sister Antonia, she seemed young again and smiling, with the look of a spouse. Some will say only of grief and death. . . . Enveloped in those heavy folds of gleaming satin, her wasted form regained its natural elegance, taking on once more an air august and absolute—'*Je maintiendrai;*' '*Ich dien.*' It was a sovereign who lay dead.

From her death chamber she was carried into the great hall of the castle, the hall of her sister Hilda's dream, to lie in state as befitted a ruler of the Grand Duchy of Luxemburg, an heiress of the House of Nassau. Four grand ducal guardsmen kept the death-

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watch. . . But her kingdom was no longer of this world.

If, as some would hold, a people can be fashioned according to the example of a ruler, and edicts be of less power than example, then the generous and noble life, *la vie magnanime*, as one of her ministers has called it, of Marie Adelaide will indeed be a sweet odour in Luxemburg.

At the end that natural world which she had so loved was to give its peculiar tribute to her. A very heavy shroud of new-fallen snow lay upon the castle of her youth, upon the dark, seed-bearing earth, upon the doubly-sealed streams. The encircling mountain tops had never flamed with a brighter incandescence before their inversion into night. '*She* would have loved it,' they kept saying among themselves.

On January 27th the Bishop of Luxemburg, Monsignor Nommesch, came to give the last blessing to the mortal remains of her whom he called 'the whitest of his flock,' in the presence of those of her blood, of friends summoned, of faithful servitors, of villagers and peasants who from afar had watched the Grand Duchess grow from childhood into womanhood. Among them was the sister to whom she had given a crown.

She was laid for her final sleep in the crypt under the altar of the castle chapel. Her bronze sarcophagus bears only the stark words:

MARIA ADELHEID
MAGNA DUX LUXEMBURGENSIS
DUX NASSOVIAE
NATA. 14. VI. 1894
OBIIT. 24.1.1924

DEATH AND TRANSFIGURATION

But that 'handful of dust' may one day in pursuance of an unquiet destiny be scattered to the winds of heaven in the clash of armies, or be carried, now to one spot, now to another, as was that of the blind King John.

On the Sunday following her death, January 28th, a final Requiem Mass was celebrated in the parish church of Lenggries to the accompaniment of the prayers and tears of those gathered together for the last time in her honour. Five years before, on that very day and hour, she had left the fullness of a kingdom for the leanness of exile. The stars of January were unfavourable to her according to mortal reckoning.

But Marie Adelaide, outcast in life, has become a sanctified being in the memory of her people. She and her destiny are of the stuff of legends. A holy magic lies in her name, evocative of 'man's whole time' not alone of his mortality. She and the long-dead Ermesinde are the brightest jewels in the crown of Luxemburg, abiding treasure in the land.

A sense of the incalculability of fate must trouble whoever thinks on the life-history of Marie Adelaide, Grand Duchess of Luxemburg, Duchess of Nassau. An ancient sage has said that 'all things are in fate, yet all things are not decreed by fate.' The Gospels tell of the two women who are grinding at a mill — 'one shall be taken, the other left.'

Marie Adelaide's sister Charlotte with her six children — her two sons — has been left to enjoy the secure and tranquil place made ready for her by that child of tragedy whose kingdom was not of this

M A R I E A D E L A I D E

world. Luxemburg is again happy among the nations
—having no history.

‘BUONRIPOSO’

BAR HARBOUR, MAINE,

November, 1928.

22 VIA GREGORIANA, ROME,

May, 1931.



SKETCH MAP
OF THE
**GRAND DUCHY OF
LUXEMBURG**

GRAND DUCHY
ENCLOSED THUS



SCALE
MILES 5 10 15